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XLRR8R

108
JUNE / JULY
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Devin the Dude photographed by Jack Thompson



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Last year, a former Russian spy was allegedly murdered using Polonium-210. This radioactive chemical is also found in cigarette smoke, a fact at least one tobacco company was aware of in 1964.

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ED'S RANT SUMMER MADNESS



The Real Heat (photo by Billa)

The air is thick with the sizzle of a whole neighborhood grilling, and the ice cream truck is lazily circling the block. I will not give in to the temptation of its tinny siren song. I will be strong. I will remain here indoors until this issue is properly “put to bed” (magazine-speak for when this action-packed jumble of words and images is finally sent off to the printer), popsicles be damned.

Frankly, traveling all corners of this country asking artists about this summer has got me amped. I’m already getting my summer playlist together: Devin the Dude’s “Fuck Faces,” the On the Road to Paris remix of Digitalism’s “Pogo,” the *Tropical* CD from grime MC/producer JME, Grizzly Bear, LTJ Bukem’s “Atlantis,” Chicago house. Then, of course, there’s getting in touch with all the stuff I never gave enough credit the first time around (Inspirational Carpets, look out).

When putting together the content for this *XLR8R* installment, I often asked myself what this summer was going to be all about. The dance-band explosion, for one. With LCD Soundsystem, Justice, and Soulwax getting mega-love—and blog house, or electro-house, or whatever it’s called this week blowing indie kids’ minds from here to eternity—it seemed prime time to sit down with Digitalism, the newest purveyors of distorted-to-hell dance *musique*. Writer Andrew Parks caught up with them poolside in Palm Springs before their performance at Coachella, and Brianna was on hand with photographer Piper Ferguson, who shot them next to sci-fi-themed objects at a desert retreat that just happened to belong to actor Eric Szmanda (“Greg Sanders” from *CSI*).

Also feeling the heat was Jesse Serwer, who jetted to Houston at the last minute to eat ribs in the studio with rap’s most lovable stoner, Devin the Dude. (Sorry, Snoop!) Nothing says lazy summertime cruising like busting Devin’s G-Funk-on-sizzurp beats and smoothed-out story raps from your Olds... or your busted-ass Honda Accord, and we needed to find out how this dude has consistently made the same old song (weed, women, woes) sound new again.

If you can’t feel the steam rising off the paper yet, then turn to page 74 for the neon explosions known as Hadouken and The Real Heat, the latter of which redefines the girl group, sounding like some hybrid child of Neneh Cherry, Lisa Lisa, and Adult. while looking like the newest Jeff Koons sculpture. Not enough eye candy? Superdeux continues the retinal explosion with lollipop-colored visuals for our Vis-Ed section. (Should you need to cool off, you may do so with an icy cold injection of Black Strobe, starting on page 68.)

Summer is also about friends, and we couldn’t have made this issue happen without a ton of them. To all the people we hold dear, thank you for providing inspiration, letting us call in special favors, and taking us out for much-needed walks and iced coffees when the going gets rough. We owe you a Bomb Pop, or five. Now where’s that ice cream truck?

— Vivian Host, Editor

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Digitalism photographed by Piper Ferguson; type treatment by Colin Strandberg

Upper Playground Worldwide
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Photo by: Boogie
upperplayground.com



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BILLA

London-based photographer Billa has been documenting the Shoreditch party scene since moving there in 2001. Along the way he has photographed friends, clubs, bands, and fashion labels that have sprung from the East London scene. For this issue of *XLR8R*, he photographed our style spread with The Real Heat and Hadouken. Billa currently shoots for the party pages of *The Super Super* magazine, but when he's not doing that, he's off DJing at after-hours parties in illegal drinking dens.

www.shitbilla.com



PETER NICHOLSON

After being lured into the sleazy world of electronic music circa 1986 via the gateway drug of Shep Pettibone remixes, Peter Nicholson quickly sank deeper into depravity via the thrill of annoying his hippie roommates with Sweet Exorcist records and spending Sunday mornings at SF club The End Up. Much of the following chaos is a blur, but the last half-dozen years have been spent dancing with his kids, racing his bike, and pontificating about music nobody listens to for periodicals nobody reads.



PIPER FERGUSON

Piper Ferguson is an L.A.-based photographer, director, and club promoter who hails from the great Bay Area town of Petaluma. After graduating from San Francisco State, she relocated to Spain where she studied and taught English. Since arriving in L.A., it's been an amazing journey of photographing and filming bands like this issue's cover stars Digitalism while dodging sprinklers in Palm Springs. Some day, she hopes to complete her documentary on an interesting faction of the NYC indie music scene.

www.piperferguson.com



COLIN STRANDBERG

Designer Colin Strandberg hails from the frigid terrains of Minneapolis, where his skin has thickened in order to deal with the cold temps, blizzards, and brain freezes of designing and illustrating on a day-to-day basis. His list of clients is as long as the icicles hanging from his gutters. Colin, who designed this issue's type and illustrated the disco bands package, currently awaits the summer, when he can shed his winter coat, drink lemonade, and work on other freshly squeezed projects.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Got something to say? Love us? Hate us? Write us at letters@xlr8r.com or send mail to *XLR8R* Magazine, 1388 Haight Street #105, San Francisco CA 94117.



April Issue #106



May Issue #107

A-Trak was talking about [*XLR8R TV* Episode 3]. Anyways keep up the great work and do a feature on the Trouble and Bass crew since you guys sponsor their monthly.

Mark M. via the web

Don't Stop La Rock

Dear Editor,
Loved the nod to Dust La Rock [#106 April, "Good Stuff"]. In fact, I'm diggin' all of the design stuff you've been covering lately. Anyway I can see some of that design love on the website pretty please?

Sara via the web

Don't Stop the Rock

I love *XLR8R* because, in a world full of rock and hip-hop mags, you guys devote yourself to electronica. So I should be pissed about the fact that the last issue [#106 April] of my favorite magazine wasted so many pages on the guitars of Battles, Explosions in the Sky, and even BARR. Should be pissed, but I can't! I can't! I love those

bands. If you're gonna do rock stuff, keep up the good work and do it right.

Roger Frank via the web

Any Questions?

For a long time now, the various guest sections of your magazine have been the most interesting. JDH & Dave P, BARR, and DJ Mehdi are all amazing. My only suggestion: Why not expand these columns beyond just what they are listening to or what equipment they use? I loved the questionnaire you did with Justice in the year-end issue. Why not repeat that format more often (i.e. best show you've been to, best movie you've recently seen, etc.).

Morgan Phillips via the web

In issue #105 ("Wrap Battle"), we incorrectly stated that Graniph was founded by German expats living in Tokyo. The company was actually started by three Japanese t-shirt makers in 2001. In issue #107 ("From Berlin With Lust Mixtape"), we incorrectly represented Khan with a photograph of Copy. Also in issue #107 ("Magic Tricks"), we incorrectly identified a pair of Keep shoes as being made by Upper Playground. *XLR8R* regrets the errors.



XLR8R'S "MOVING VANS" CONTEST

Get moving with a new pair of Vans and some hot new tunes for the road.

This issue we bid farewell to our friend and bro, designer David Clark, as he packs his bags, his dog Kosta, and a grip of Vans sneakers into the back of his pick-up truck and heads down to his new home in Austin, Texas. He's been a friend to many, particularly the fine folks at **Vans**, who've been kind enough to lace two winners (one male and one female) with a hot pair of new kicks this month. Of course, David needs some driving music so we're also throwing in copies of **Digitalism's** *Idealism* (Astralwerks), **Feist's** *The Reminder* (Cherrytree-Interscope), and the Mark E. Smith-and-Mouse on Mars project **Von Sudenfed's** *Tromatic Reflexions* (Domino) for the long haul.

Ol' Davey C has been a Vans freak for years, so he's amassed quite a collection. Your task is to guess how many pairs of Vans he'll be packing on his trip.

- A) 10-15 B) 16-20 C) 21-30 D) 31-40

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Entries will be accepted via standard mail and email. Entries must be received by July 24, 2007. Send your answers and your shoe size to *XLR8R*'s "Moving Vans" Contest, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117 or email contest@xlr8r.com with "XLR8R's Moving Vans Contest" in the subject line.



www.vans.com, www.cherrytreerecords.com, www.astralwerks.com, www.dominorecordco.com

BITTER BASTARD'S WORST OF FESTIVALS 2007

You may think we go to festivals to check out all the new bands and DJs and work on our bitching tans, but we really just go to lose faith in humanity. In between all the fashion *faux pas* (shit happens when people are forced to dress for hot weather), absurd performance art, massive displays of flesh, and alluring stands of fried food, it's a wonder we actually absorb any music at all. Here's the best of the worst from Austin's SXSW, Miami's WMC, and Southern California's Coachella Festival.



1. Thinking Inside the Box

(Taken on the Coachella lawn) You there, with your poo-poo dread and your nifty trashcan hat. How does it feel to be the reason people don't recycle?

2. Elf Porn

(Taken outside the Sahara dance tent, Coachella) This guy—with his girlfriend (in a Hustler trucker hat) looking on jealously from the side—was getting such a boner from taking a picture with the most crack-headed elf ever to be on *America's Next Top Model* that he could feel the vibrations down to his Crocs.

3. Food Court Pharaoh

(Taken in the Coachella "European"-themed food court) In the land of hot dogs, the Pizza Pharaoh is king. The wise men from the Temple of Glazed Almonds were nowhere to be found.

4. Blow-Up Doll

(Taken in the Coachella VIP area) As he paraded by with a woman dressed as a blown-up vagina, this woman beckoned him over with her crooked finger; apparently, he was pretty charming. Some girls want a guy that isn't afraid to make a fool of himself. And you know what they say about the size of a guy's balloons.

5. Wanky Dicknuts

(Taken at the Beatport party, WMC) These two had a beachball in between them that they were humping, while looking around to see if anyone thought it was hot. The only person looking at them was a 60-year-old man. The guy in front of them was so busy posing with his exquisite dragon pendant that he couldn't care less.

6. Child Abuse

(Taken at WMC) We know you're only five, but you're gonna have to learn to look after yourself when mommy is giving her new "boyfriend" a meth-hazed reach-around on the patio furniture. Remember: Stay away from the deep end of the pool and men with moustaches.

7. What the Fuck Is an Enchilada?

(Taken on the street at SXSW) It didn't have to go down like this. From Wikipedia: "An enchilada is a traditional Mexican dish. Enchilada comes from the verb *enchilar* ('to add chile pepper to'). The traditional enchilada sauce is just that—dried red chile peppers soaked and ground into a sauce."



EFDemin

A TECHNO TEAR-JERKER RECORDS ROCKS IN VIENNA, BANGS BEATS IN BERLIN.

"If house is a nation," exhorts a sample on Efdemin's Chicago-indebted "Just a Track." *"I want to be President. If you vote for me, I promise I will deliver you even more bass, even more soul, longer hours on the dancefloor, DJs who believe as we believe."*

Such brash promises seem out of character for the Berlin-based artist (born Phillip Sollmann), whose previous releases for Hamburg's Dial and Liebe Detail labels have seemed more atmospheric than despot. Like label peers Lawrence and Pantha du Prince, Sollmann has—on tracks like the poignant "Jean" and "Bergwein"—generally trafficked in tear-jerking techno and heart-rending house.

Sollmann's sound is highly influenced by his studies at Vienna's Institute of Computer Music; throughout his three years there, he made many of the field recordings that underpin the tracks on his eponymous debut album. During his first 12 months in Austria, Sollmann mainly focused on sampling the sounds of insects and small animals to generate drum-like hits. In his second year, he archived the city's traffic noises and urban soundscapes, including the children that can be heard on the record's closing track, "Bergwein." Album opener "Knocking at the Grand" contains recordings of Sollmann banging on stone plates at Vienna's Museum Moderner Kunst, an experience that will beget a series of related installations over the next few years.

Vienna's greatest impact on Sollmann was its sense of seclusion. "I could isolate myself from social stress because I didn't know so

many people and, in Vienna, nobody cares if you don't call them," he says. "I had a lot of time for myself. I didn't really finish much music during that time but I started tons of processes and concepts that I can work on during the next few years."

Conversely, relocating to Berlin—where he's acquired a residency at techno hub Panoramabar—has been like a shot of caffeine to Sollmann's system. "Meeting all these people in the art and music scenes really made me wake up," he says. "So many people from different places had moved here that when I finally arrived it felt like a strange kind of homecoming."

Sollmann describes his sets at the near-legendary Panoramabar as "one long trip through Frankfurt, Chicago, Detroit, Hamburg, Berlin, and back to Detroit." "House [is always] involved, even if it feels like techno," he explains. "House will pick you up when you feel down. House got me into electronic music and I will always refer to that."

Efdemin's *Efdemin* is out now on Dial. www.dial-rec.de



TEE MONEY

Art in the Age makes you love t-shirts again.

Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction is an intelligent t-shirt line. What did you expect? Their name comes from a 1936 Walter Benjamin essay that is basically the defining text of university cultural studies programs. That said, you don't have to be a brainiac to wear their garms—their stuff will appeal to anyone seeking a t-shirt sans shameless branding, metal graphics, or cartoon images seemingly designed for preschoolers. Started in Philly by illustrator Tim Gough and friends, Art in the Age enlists

talented bros such as Andrew Jeffrey Wright, Ben Woodward, and Seripop to create cranium-twisting designs—wearable art, if you will. But perhaps the most pleasant surprise (besides their thin, well-fitting cuts) is that the dopest designs are from people you probably don't know, including Pete Whitney's weird wizard shit and Gerik Forston's epic dinosaur gore. Keep your eyeballs peeled. *Vivian Host*
www.artintheage.com

T-shirt designs from Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction (clockwise from top left): *Anguished Awareness* by Annette Monnier; *Catastrophe Tunic* by Paul Coors; *Heaven* by Alex da Corte; *Doily* by Elsa B Shadley; *Shigfint* by Seripop; *Smokestacks* by AAMR



SCREENED IN

Three new music documentaries get the inside story.



TAPES N' TAPES

Silly graphics and haphazard organization aside, Walter Bell's film *Mixtape Inc.*—which will tour the indie festival circuit before it lands on DVD—does a great job of explaining the origins and inner workings of the hip-hop mixtape game. The doc features over 70 quality interviews with the likes of Kay Slay and DJ Clue? (who speak on their innovations, and their feud), Lloyd Banks and Fabulous, and old-schoolers Red Alert and DJ Bruce B, who drop the requisite hip-hop history. Truly hilarious moments include an interview with Curt Nice (who runs a mixtape shop from his mom's basement in East Cleveland) and an awkward-as-hell freestyle from Kanye West and his boy GLC, who claims his main focus is "lookin' fresh as hell," despite looking straight out of a TJ Maxx clearance sale. Ooh snap. *Marty B*
www.mixtapeinc.com



WE ARE FAMILY

The adage "family is what you make it" couldn't apply more precisely than it does to Daniel Smith's band, The Danielson Famile. The group, formed in 1995 around Smith's Rutgers University senior thesis, is comprised of his actual brothers and sisters (along with a few friends like Sufjan Stevens), but it's obvious that "family" is always the message of Smith's lifelong, Lord-pleasing work. *Danielson: A Family Movie* (HVE; \$19.99) follows Smith's six-album path while closely examining his faith. Most intriguingly, it illustrates the band's penchant for making quirky pop without resorting to heavy-handed tactics to drive their point home. Perhaps that's why Danielson was practically rejected by the Christian music community, instead finding a home on labels like Secretly Canadian. Thank God. *Ken Taylor*
www.danielsonmovie.com



EURO TRIP

What do indie hip-hop artists do when they're on tour? The same stuff y'all do. Listen to the iPod, smoke weed, attempt to bone chicks (and fail), sit around the hotel lobby feeling tired as hell. Which means that only the most die-hard Detroit rap addict will catch a buzz from *Frank N Dank's European Vacation* (Needillworks, \$19.99). The documentary DVD was shot on J Dilla's last tour before he died, but mainly centers on performances and quips from rap duo Frank N Dank. Live footage and an included CD of the group are hype, but the extras are pretty bland, save for an airport gab session with Dilla, Dank, and Rhettmatic trading stories about Biggie and Busta. *Marty B*
www.needillworks.com



A page of illustrations and assorted works from *Jeremyville Sessions*



JUST JEREMY

A new book from Jeremyville bares all... about the creative process.

From toys to tees to treads, Sydney, Australia-based Jeremyville is a tireless supporter of the myriad manifestations of our generation's style and design. Following *Vinyl Will Kill*, his 2004 tome about designer toy culture, *Jeremyville Sessions* (IdN; hardcover, \$40) is a visual riot documenting this unrestrained doodler's staggering array of collaborative projects: figurines for Qee and Kid Robot; illustrations with Deanne Cheuk and Geoff McFetridge; customized Adicolor sneakers and "Sketchel" messenger bags. More than just an artist monograph, the book and its accompanying DVD dismantle design's ivory tower as Jeremy lays bare his creative process—from blank templates and step-by-step photos, to interviews where he explains how collaborations have paved the way to his worldwide success. For those seeking strictly visual treats, the volume also comes with a poster, stickers, and a grip of free computer wallpapers and screensavers. *Tyra Bangs*
www.jeremyville.com, www.idnworld.com

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MILANESE

HEAVY METAL DUBSTEP FROM BIRMINGHAM'S MAD BASS TECHNICIAN.

Birmingham, UK's reputation as a bombed-out, concrete wasteland is slowly changing, but you'd never know that listening to the music of Steve Milanese. After leaving London in favor of the birthplace of Judas Priest, Godflesh, and Duran Duran over three years ago, Milanese and his friends found themselves desperate and miserable. "I wrote a lot of angry music here 'cos I was broke," he says. "And when I had to finally get a job it really sucked. But I think I had to go through all that to write *Extend*."

No one knew quite what to think of *Extend*, released on Planet Mu in 2006. Sitting on the fringes of countless post-'ardcore spin-off genres, the tracks were both physical and mental assaults—dead pressure bass slammed through multiple layers of fractured breaks and grit. Milanese calls the template "digital grimecore." Pretty fucking *Nathan Barley*, but the title is apt—the music recalls both grime and dubstep in tempo and structure, but the end result is far too militant to fit into the square pegs of either scene's rank and file.

Luckily, tastemakers like BBC DJ Mary Anne Hobbs and Miss Kittin began championing Milanese tracks while everyone else was scratching their heads. Hobbs went so far as to match Milanese (who also records as Mr. Ion and Billy Hologram) up with grime crew Virus Syndicate for the collaboration "Dead Man Walking," a track later featured on Hobbs' *Warrior Dubz* compilation. All this new exposure made earlier Milanese output (like 2004's brilliant *I-Up* EP) a hot commodity, and Birmingham legend Justin Broadrick (Godflesh, Techno Animal, Jesu) even began referencing the man as

spiritual heir to the Techno Animal aesthetic.

As with the music of Techno Animal, layering is a huge part of the Milanese sound. "All the drums are compressed together with the rest of the track [so] everything reacts to everything else; drums forcing down other sounds... all fighting to get out," Milanese explains of his technique. "[It's] lots of plug-ins, lots of layers of sound. Each snare or bass drum is built up from several samples. A bass drum might have one kick for the sub, another for the pop, and one for grit."

Milanese's attention to detail might sound like some heavy-metal-transposed-to-dance-music-virtuoso shit, but the man insists otherwise. "I got to this point from a different path: the jungle/techno pirates in London when I was a teenager, and studying sonic arts in school. [But] I was into a lot of grunge and guitar stuff, [and I] still am—like Th' Faith Healers and Daisy Chainsaw. Not Sabbath-type stuff so much."

Milanese may not be a metal dude in grime's clothing, but not everyone can make beats this gigantic. "I just did a show in Belgium with Vex'd and Mary Anne Hobbs [and] the gig was mad" says Milanese. "The bass on the stage was making my vision shakey. I couldn't even see what I was playing!"

Milanese's *Adapt* EP is out now on Planet Mu.
www.mr-ion.com, www.myspace.com/milanese1



GOOD STUFF

A few of Derrick Hodgson's favorite things.

Derrick Hodgson (also known as Mad Real) creates crazy, chaotic worlds populated by floaters, poppers, peepers, and sprouts—doodled characters that are mixed-up and pastel-colored, but with personalities not unlike those found on Earth. The bearded Hodgson grew up on a farm north of Toronto, and even though he now calls the big city home, he keeps in touch with nature, surrounding himself with light, plants, and animals, and subsists mainly on ale and wild blueberry pie. Hodgson recently collaborated with camping retailers Mountain Equipment Co-op and on t-shirts with fellow Torontonian Tania Sanhueza. He's also been hard at work on two forthcoming winter art shows in Toronto and Madrid. His boombox humming with the gentle strains of King Jammy, Loscil, and Neil Young, we asked Hodgson what products he wholeheartedly endorses. *Vivian Host*
www.madreal.com



1

TOM DIXON ECO WARE TABLE SET (\$199)

This "Eco Ware" table, cup, and bowl set reminds me of backwoods cabins and chuck wagons. They're 80 percent bamboo, but the remaining is a resin binder so if ya drop 'em and they break, instead of chucking them in the garbage, just pitch 'em on the old compost pile.
www.tomdixon.net



2

TANIA SANHUEZA KALEIDOSCOPE OWL (\$150) AND NEW YEAR MUSHROOMS (\$110)

Tania Sanhueza is a Toronto-based artist who works primarily with textiles. These little sculptures are done in the true folk/craft tradition using recycled material and lots of love. The burrowing owl is an endangered species here in Canada and I love the mushies, especially when they are made out of cashmere.
Available at www.magic-pony.com



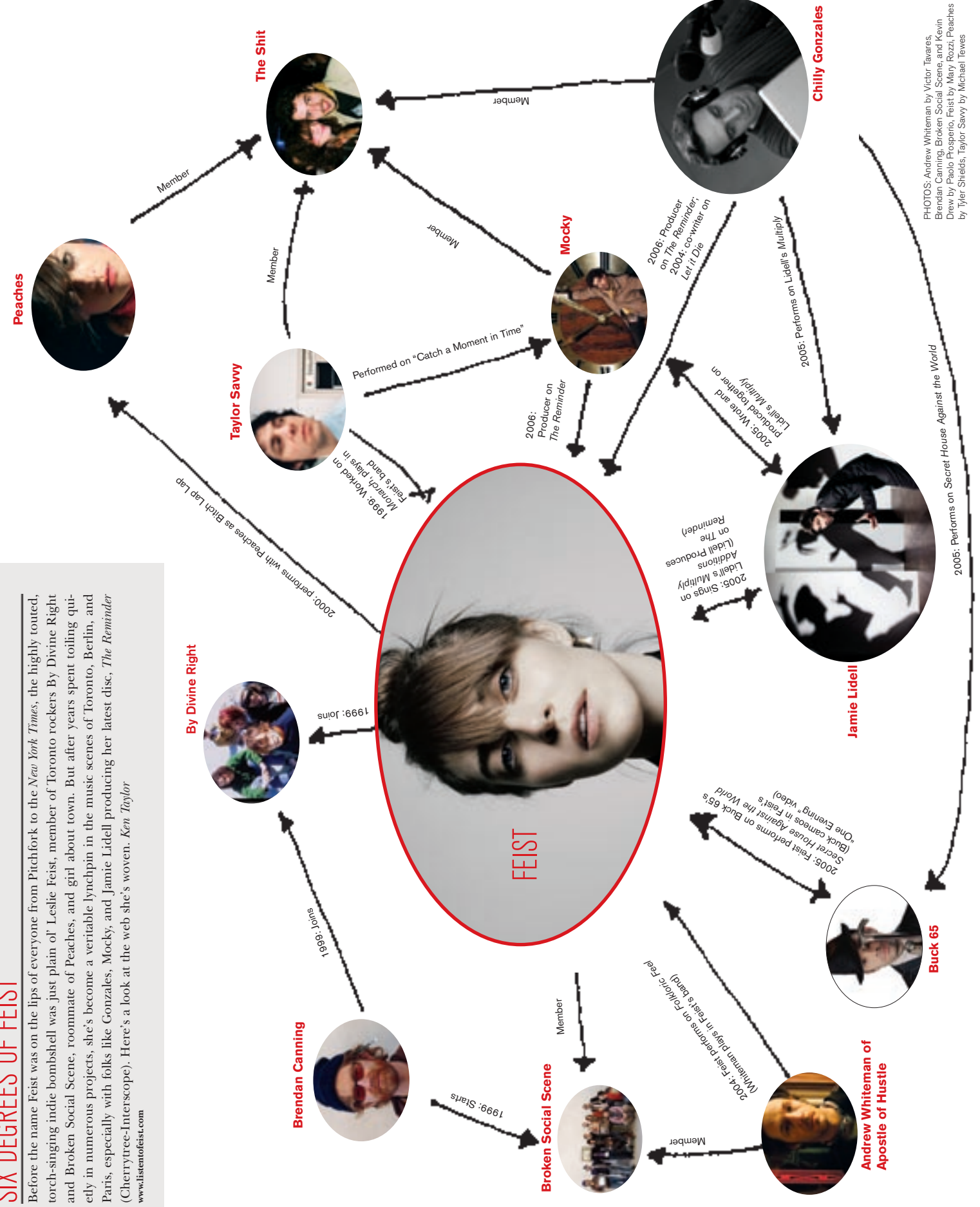
3

GRAIN SURFBOARDS (\$1950)

These sliders are pure works of art. I have never ridden one of them but I'm saving my pennies. The Wherry 6.4 Fish is what I have my eye on. Handmade goodness outta Maine.
www.grainsurfboards.com

SIX DEGREES OF FEIST

Before the name Feist was on the lips of everyone from Pitchfork to the *New York Times*, the highly touted, torch-singing indie bombshell was just plain ol' Leslie Feist, member of Toronto rockers By Divine Right and Broken Social Scene, roommate of Peaches, and girl about town. But after years spent toiling quietly in numerous projects, she's become a veritable lynchpin in the music scenes of Toronto, Berlin, and Paris, especially with folks like Gonzales, Mocky, and Jamie Lidell producing her latest disc, *The Reminder* (Cherrytree-Interscope). Here's a look at the web she's woven. *Ken Taylor*
www.listenstofeist.com



PHOTOS: Andrew Whiteman by Victor Tavares, Brendan Canning, Broken Social Scene, and Kevin Drew by Paolo Prosperio, Feist by Mary Rozzi, Peaches by Tyler Shields, Taylor Savvy by Michael Teves



Words Andy Hermann
Photo Daniel J. Ashes

C-MON & KYPSKI

DUTCH HIP-HOP HEADS CHANNEL MAURICE SENDAK AND MOROCCAN VIBES.

C-Mon & Kypski are big in Morocco... sort of. Seeking inspiration for their latest album, *Where the Wild Things Are*, the four-man hip-hop/electronic group spent a month driving around the Moroccan desert in an RV filled with turntables and samplers, having adventures and writing music. Though the album title was inspired by Maurice Sendak's classic children's book, producer/beatmaker Simon "C-Mon" Akkermans says that it didn't stick as a theme until the Morocco trip. "At first, we wanted to take the book as some kind of guideline for the album," he says. "But when we started driving around the Sahara, it was like, 'Yeah! This is fucking where the wild things are!'"

You can hear Sendak's mischievous monsters—and the shifting desert sands—throughout the Dutch group's third and most eclectic album. North African percussion and strings clash with a clarinet-led klezmer band on "Circus C-Mon & Kypski"; a jungle stomp and bestial chanting accompany rapper Pete Philly on "Make My Day."

Akkermans also credits his hometown of Utrecht for C-Mon & Kypski's freewheeling sound. Utrecht has long been open to different styles, Akkermans says, acting as a sort of Manchester to Amsterdam's London ever since Urban Dance Squad first put it on the pop map in the late '80s.

It also helps that, unlike so many hip-hop-based acts, C-Mon & Kypski is truly a band. Founding duo Akkermans and turntablist Thomas "Kypski" Elbers added musicians Daniel Rose and Jori Collignon to the lineup soon after they started playing live shows, and very quickly began sharing songwriting duties with their two newest members. "It's four people with a lot of different influences," Akkermans explains. "Jori and Dan come from pop, rock music, also punk. Me and Kypski are into more of the black side of music... And we've also discovered a lot of world music we really like—gypsy music, Moroccan, Arabic."

Where the Wild Things Are is still without a U.S. label, but that didn't stop C-Mon & Kypski from making a few live appearances in the States this spring, including a stop at South by Southwest, where they played an appropriately Sendak-like venue called the Enchanted Forest. "It's like a real forest, with a real creek running through it," Akkermans marvels. "So close to *Where the Wild Things Are*... a real fairy-tale vibe."

C-Mon & Kypski's *Where the Wild Things Are* is out now on Jamm Brand. www.c-monandkypski.nl

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WHAT IS IT?: COSMIC

Blast off with slow, rhythmic pulsing straight from the shores of Rimini in the '70s.

Sometimes Gomma's DJ Mooner and Baliu's Danny Wang have the same wet dream. They're in a ritzy club in a seaside town just south of the Italian resort Rimini, and it's 1977 and they're dancing slowly, oh so slowly, like swimming through syrup while a DJ in a glass elevator moves up and down between two dancefloors.

The club in this dream is La Baia Degli Angeli, and it's where Italian DJs Daniele Baldelli and Mozart helped birth a niche sound. Taught to mix by Baia's resident DJs—a pair of unknown New Yorkers named Bob Day and Tom Sison—Baldelli and Mozart created a psychedelic, reverberating, rhythmic musical mass out of the only records they could get their hands on. With a lack of context for the music and almost no outside DJ influence, they simply played anything that sounded good to them: percussion-heavy African recordings, Depeche Mode and Tangerine Dream extended mixes, classical music overlaid with delay effects, funk 45s pitched to 33.

In 1979, Baldelli moved to a new club with a spaceship-shaped DJ booth, where he played through the mid-'80s. This was Cosmic in Lasize on the Lago di Garda, and it's where the name "cosmic" crystallized to describe this slow, pulsing electronic mix. A few towns away, at the Typhoon club in Brescia, DJ Beppe Loda was pioneering a similar vibe he called "Afro," mixing African tracks and proto-house with experimental Chris and Cosey jams.

Though Cosmic/Afro clubs still exist today, they're usually watered-down world music affairs with little of the spacey exoticism of the original. But plenty of obsessive DJs have dug up information from those days, which seem to have influenced everyone from DJ Harvey to Francois K. And if you search "Cosmic" and "Baldelli" on eBay you'll turn up a number of bootleg repressings of tracks from old mixtapes.

"It sounds kind of timeless to me," says New York DJ Jeremy Campbell, when I ask him about his fascination with the sound. "They're taking all those different types of tracks and putting them into a whole new context. They're borrowing from all different types of music and making it work together in interesting ways."

Campbell, who brought Loda to the U.S. last year, plays "cosmic"-influenced sets at his Dazzle Ships party, but says he has to create a balance. "About half of it is danceable stuff and the other half the audience would have to be on Quaaludes to enjoy it. To me, the coolest thing about [cosmic] is it's not usually just one style—it's all about mixing some organic funk track into some arpeggiating synth track. You really have to know your records well." *Vivian Host Illustration by Trophy*
www.danielebaldelli.com, www.myspace.com/beppeLoda, www.discotopia.com, www.tropicalcomputersystem.com

COOL KHELLING

Getting down and dirty in year eight of SoCal's Coachella Festival.
Words [Vivian Host](#) Photos [Brianna Pope](#)



NIC OFFER FROM !!!

Brooklyn, NY
What song are you most excited to play? We have this one with an illicit title. It's a remix of "Bend Over Beethoven" and between the band, we call it "Cocannon." But we can't bring ourselves to promote cocaine to the kids so we can't say the title when we play it.
Summer look: I always like to look like I'm having the time of my life. Like I'm on a permanent vacation.
What will you be listening to this summer? We just played an in-store at Amoeba Music in Hollywood and I bought \$170 worth of '60s and '70s African guitar records. They sounded pretty damn great driving through the desert.
What's your dirtiest summer memory? I'll tell you later.

JEREMY GREENSPAN AND MATTHEW DIDEMUS OF JUNIOR BOYS

Hamilton, Canada
Who are you most excited to see? Jeremy: It was fun to see Hot Chip. They're awesome, especially their clothes.
What is your summer look? Matthew: You're looking at it. All black and long sleeves.
Beach, pool, or hot tub? Jeremy: Beach. Hot tubs are always kind of bad and gross.
What's your dirtiest summer memory? Jeremy: We don't have any. We're Canadian. There was this one time where I held a chick's hand...



GREGG GILLIS (GIRL TALK)

Pittsburgh, PA
What song are you most excited to play? I sampled some Rage Against the Machine and that felt really good.
Summer look: Usually it's a v-neck tie-dye shirt with some cut-off shorts, or jeans with an open flannel. And no haircuts.
The most beautiful thing I've seen at Coachella is... Paris Hilton dancing on stage next to a Girl Talk balloon.



ED DROSTE AND DAN ROSSEN OF GRIZZLY BEAR

Brooklyn, NY
What song are you most excited to play? Ed: We're really sick of playing every song by now but... "Little Brother." Dan: I like playing "Knife."
Summer look: Ed: I'm letting myself go. Dan: My new overalls and boat shoes.
What will you be listening to this summer? Ed: [Teen pop sensation] Jojo, summer-jam style. And I'm still listening to The Papercuts and Beach House.
Will you be having sex in your trailer? Dan: [Disgusted look]; Ed: No. My boyfriend is here but we forgot the lube.
What's your dirtiest summer memory? Ed: [Points to Dan] Just say eating a burrito and having a little fall on you. No, don't print that.



DJ MEHDI

Paris, France
Who are you most excited to see? Justice, of course. It's their first live show.
Summer look: Scottish tartan kilts, a So-Me t-shirt, and Adidas sneakers.
Will you be having sex in your trailer? You mean with Busy P?
The most beautiful thing I've seen at Coachella is... Pedro Winter's nipples.

DJ Mehdi (left) with Ed Banger designer So-Me



MIKE RELM

San Francisco, CA
What song are you most excited to play? A sample of Rage Against the Machine's "Bulls on Parade." I know everyone here wants to see Rage and if I was 24 hours away, I'd want a teaser. This is something to hold them over, like a snack. Like a pretzel.
Summer look: A suit, a skinny tie, and tennis shoes. That's for all seasons.
Will you be having sex in your trailer? I just did. You have to! It's Coachella.



IRA TREVISIAN AND ADRIANO CINTRA OF CSS

São Paulo, Brazil
Who are you most excited to see? Ira: We really want to meet Maya Rudolph. I know she's not here... but we always hope to run into her when we're in America.
What will you be listening to this summer? Ira: The Jackson 5. Adriano: Tilly & The Wall
What's your dirtiest summer memory? Adriano: We had a huge afterparty at our rental house two nights ago. This girl got naked and jumped in the pool and started rubbing her tits all over everyone. Then everyone in the party started chanting "Naked girl! Naked girl!" and the neighbors must have heard because the cops showed up.
The most beautiful thing I've seen at Coachella is... Ira: The sunset yesterday. Adriano: The mountains... and the hamburger here. It's amazing.



E*VAX AND MIKE STROUD OF RATATAT

Brooklyn, NY
What song are you most excited to play? E*Vax: "Manzanita"
Mike: "17 Years." It's so fun. "Manzanita" is too complicated.
What is your summer look? E*Vax: Bathrobes
What will you be listening to this summer? E*Vax: Os Mutantes and Panther; Mike: White Flight

THE FIELD

A SAMPLE-HAPPY SWEDE LOOKS OUT ACROSS THE VAST LANDSCAPE OF POP PERFECTION.

Despite his penchant for crafting hazy, atmospheric suites of ambient techno, The Field's sole member, Axel Willner (who also records as Cordouan and Lars Blek), is a pop music specialist. His debut LP, *From Here We Go Sublime* (Kompakt), is a 10-track interpretation of pop's past, with major-label samples painstakingly edited for maximum dancefloor efficiency and minimum recognizability. Even when he won't admit it, the Stockholm native knows his stuff, musically. Sure, he's entrenched in the Swedish techno scene, but does he dig on the country's finest pop singers like Jens Lekman and Sondre Lerche? "Sondre is from Norway," he's quick to point out, "and the music I like most from there is all the black metal stuff." Touché.

To tease out the greatest moments of pop music's history, Willner looks to the classics. "I probably think that men singing in a painful falsetto can be some of the finest," he notes. If '80s R&B/pop comes to mind, you're in the right ballpark: "A Paw In My Face," a glistening techno track that plods along on a tight 4/4 beat daubed with triggered guitar strums, playfully makes incisions to the breakdown from Lionel Richie's "Hello," but you wouldn't know it until the punchline at the song's end.

Sometimes the samples are obvious (the title track's skipping, churning snippet of The Flamingos' "I Only Have Eyes for You"); sometimes they're not ("Over the Ice" borrows quietly from Kate Bush). Regardless, Willner snickers at the thought of legal clearances and is mum about my guesses on what's been creatively appropriated. "One guy thought The Four Tops' "[Reach Out] I'll Be There" was something by Donna Summer," he says, referring to a sample used on "Thought Vs. Action" (from an earlier EP).

It's a particularly tricky process but Willner, aided by his punk-rock background, is mindful of his digital

music's very human facets. He strives for an element of fallibility that goes beyond setting drum hits ever-so-slightly off their Pro Tools grid. On the track "Sun & Ice," Willner's system overloads with delay effects and crashes; he happily rides out the storm, the sound crumpling under its own weight and eventually dropping out entirely before returning directly on-beat. (In an interview with Pitchfork Media, he claimed that all of his songs are mixed live to two channels, and that he leaves in most mistakes.)

But as any pop aficionado will tell you, it's not the technicalities that make a song stick—it's the emotions behind it. "When I'm in a certain mood, when I have a lot of things to sort out, I might hear an old track that I want to use," says Willner. "[I'll use] both the sample and my feeling that I got from it."

From Here We Go Sublime is out now on Kompakt.
www.garmonbozia.se



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- July 14 Chicago - Empty Bottle
- July 16 Edmonton - Starlite Room
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JANELLE MONAE

ALIEN POP AND CYBER SOUL FROM BIG BOI'S BOUNDARY-PUSHING NEW PROTEGE.

The OutKast-affiliated Dungeon Family, arguably the crew that established Southern hip-hop as a creative and commercial force, is a locus for imaginative artists bent on self-exploration. So it made sense that Janelle Monae, a young and ambitious singer from Wyandotte County, Kansas, would find her way to OutKast's Big Boi in Atlanta.

"I met Big Boi [when] I was singing backup for Scar," says Monae, referring to the *other* highly touted singer in the Purple Ribbon camp. Later, a standout solo performance of Roberta Flack's "Killing Me Softly" at P. Diddy's soul food restaurant, Justin's, prompted Big Boi to track her down. "Immediately after, I felt someone grab my arm," she remembers. "He was like, 'I really believe in you. I think we should talk.'"

Monae signed with Big Boi's Purple Ribbon imprint, and debuted on the label's 2005 compilation *Got Purp? Vol. 2*. A subsequent spotlight on OutKast's ill-fated *Idlewild* project, where she swung with an easy jazz syncopation on "Call the Law," stoked anticipation for Monae's upcoming solo endeavors.

But even the keenest futurist couldn't predict the utter weirdness of Monae's *Metropolis* project. Inspired by Fritz Lang's 1927 silent-era classic, a German Expressionist-styled meditation on the Industrial era, the album stars Monae as Cindy Mayweather, a woman who travels to the future and consorts with androids, underground workers, and evil capitalists. "I'm an alien from outer space/I'm a cyber girl without a face, a heart, or a mind," she sings on "Violet Stars/Happy Hunting!," a bounce cut ridged with guitars that evokes a harder, funkier version of OutKast's "Hey Ya!" On "Cybertronic Purgatory" she sings a wordless aria over acoustic guitars, then returns to Earth for "Sincerely, Jane," a pop critique of urban malaise.

Monae conceived the project with Wondaland Productions, a fledgling musical collective that, like her, landed its first major credit on the *Idlewild* soundtrack. "It pulls from some of the story in *Metropolis*, but it's a world of its own," says Monae of her album. "We've taken it far out. It's way further than the original."

Unusually, Monae's soulful *Metropolis* will be released as four EP-length "suites." The first will be *Metropolis Suite I of IV: The Chase*, with a new chapter landing every two or three months.

"We decided to take the symphony approach. [Classical symphonies] play a suite or two, and then you clap, and then you have intermission, and then you come back," explains Monae. "I always thought the reason why did that is [for the audience] to process what they've just heard and not overwhelm them."

Janelle Monae's *Metropolis Suite I of IV* is out now on Purple Ribbon. www.janellemonae.com





A still from Faile's video for La Phaze's "Assaut Final" as seen in *Visual Rocks*

EYE SPY

Visual Rocks peers deep inside the creation of indie music videos.



Chances are, you will not be getting \$7,000,000 to direct a widescreen space-age pop odyssey, as Mark Romanek did for Michael and Janet Jackson's "Scream." But it *is* eminently possible that you could direct a music video for your favorite indie artist. If that's your dream, then *Visual Rocks* (IdN/Gingko; softcover/DVD, \$29.95) might be your inspirational tool. The title highlights 19 music videos from the likes of Beck, Audio Bullys, and Pete Miser. No artist commentary here—this project emphasizes the creative teams (including MK12, Nylon Motion, and Nakd) behind the music. In the book and its accompanying DVD of interviews and videos, we watch Lightborne create a burning, paper-cut version of L.A. for Bad Religion, find out how Cat Solen got Evan Rachel Wood and Terrance Stamp to act out a plane crash for Bright Eyes, and follow Faile as they translate the heavy themes of power, corruption, and consumption into a video for France's La Phaze. There's not much glam here—sorry, Junior Hype Williams—but a ton of useful stories and tips make this the ideal package for frustrated creatives.

Tyra Bangs
www.gingkopress.com



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THE FUTURE OF SOUND



SPIN CYCLE

News and gossip from the music world.

This summer, hip-hop's heavy hitters are giving back to the hood. **Ice Cube** has inked a deal with A&E to produce *Good in the Hood*, a documentary look at reformed gangstas. **E-40**, after learning of the destruction of his high school band's musical instruments by vandals, donated \$12,000 to Hogan High in Vallejo, CA. Then hyphy head **Messy Marv** decided to donate proceeds from his *Fillmoe Nation Volumes 1 and 2* (Scalen/SMC) to gyms and community centers in the Fillmore District of San Francisco, the inspiration for the albums. • What's next, a scholarship awarded by **Sub Pop**? Actually, yes. Sub Pop's newly launched **Loser Scholarship** is available to high school seniors entering college. More at www.subpop.com. • Speaking of Sub Pop, remember the Singles Club? Well, **The Social Registry** has gone and done the same thing with their **Social Club**, a monthly series of 45s limited to 750 pressings. The series' first offering came last month from actress **Jena Malone** and **Her Bloodstains**. *Ew*. • Amoeba Music, the California

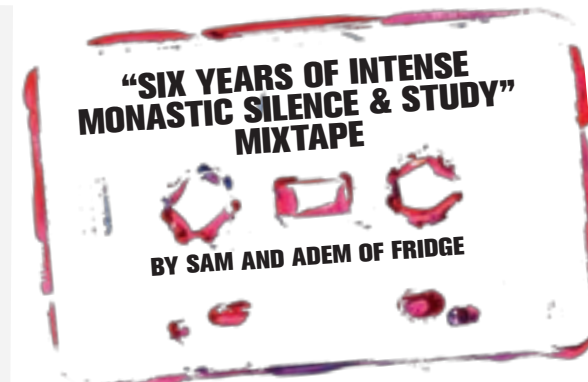
independent brick-and-mortar record shop (remember those?), recently released their first EP, a live recording of a **TV on the Radio** in-store from their flagship Hollywood location. Not in California? Grab the MP3 version at www.amoebamusic.com. • In need of new style ish? Check **UARM.net**, who recently relaunched their online shop, Greatest Hits, and blog. Or how about the **Joy Division** tribute shoe from **New Balance**, which incorporates images from *Unknown Pleasures*. • Shredders, we hope you didn't miss *Untitled*, an exhibition of original skateboard art featuring **Claw Money**, **Cycle**, **Espo**, **Ezo**, **Ghost**, **Haze**, and **Shepard Fairey** at NYC's Eye Jammie Fine Arts Gallery. www.eyejammie.com • Radio, radio! In conjunction with Toyota Yaris, who seemed to be sponsoring everything at this year's SXSW, Urban Outfitters presents **Free Yr Radio**, a showcase of UO in-stores featuring the likes of **The Rapture**, **Klaxons**, **Long Winters**, **Tapes 'N Tapes**, and **Dinosaur Jr.** The shows will happen in concert with—and to benefit—local independent radio stations across the US. • Peep Inkymole's art show, inspired by the rapper **Sage Francis**; entitled *If a Girl Writes Off the World*, it showed recently at Chelsea Market's Old Portico Space in New York. • **Artist in Residence** is a new publication that tracks the work of one single artist for a year of



their existence. The first issue, subtitled *In a Frozen Sea: A Year With Sigur Rós*, follows the band through the last leg of their Icelandic tour. • More on the book front: powerHouse books and *Vice* have teamed up for *Vice Books*, whose first two releases will be *Skinema*, a compilation of *Vice* magazine porn reviews by **Chris Nieratko**, and an anthology of **Lesley Arfin's** *Dear Diary* columns. • We love us some ballet and techno partnerships. Grab *Shut Up and Dance* (Ostgut), a recording of a monumental performance involving modern techno composers **Sleeparchive**, **Âme**, and **Luciano** alongside choreographers **Ronny Savkovic** and **Kathlyn Pope**—it's basically the Berlin Staatsballett at the Berghain club. Berliners, don't miss the live shows, happening between June 27 and July 5 at Berghain. Visit www.berghain.de and www.staatsballett-berlin.de for more. • Been waiting for-

ever for the follow-up to U.N.K.L.E.'s *Never, Never, Land?* Wait no more. Expect *War Stories*, on James Lavelle's new Surrender All label, to hit in July and feature a rock-heavy cast including QOTSA's Josh Homme, The Cult's Ian Astbury, Twiggy Ramirez, and folks from Nada Surf and Eagles of Death Metal. • Happy 10th Birthday: Nordic Trax and Six Degrees labels. RIP: Tonic NYC.

1. Messy Marv
2. Luciano
3. Tapes 'N Tapes
4. Cycle deck
5. *Skinema* cover
6. Jena Malone



1. JAMES HOLDEN "Idiot" Intense. Proves, like Aphex, that the micromanagement of electronic "dance" music gives much more emotionally than the cheap filter-and-release crapola of the 1990s.

2. TOUMANI DIABATE AND BALLAKE SISSOKO "Famade [Instrumental]" An ESP connection between two virtuosos unmatched since the dueling guitar solos of Dragonforce's "Through the Fire and Flames."

3. FLOWER CORSANO DUO "Fire" This song has an impossible level of energy and control.

4. MULATU ASTATKE "Yekermo Sew (A Man of Experience and Wisdom)" An ethno-funk-jazz jam with some of the only shredding ever in an Ethiopian banger of the 1969-'74 period.

5. BURIAL "Distant Lights" I read that this album is about driving around South London late at night in the rain, listening to the radio. It's fantastically evocative of this.

6. AMIINA "Primera" Not for the paranoid: wine-glass drones, music boxes, and the most spooky clonking I have ever heard.

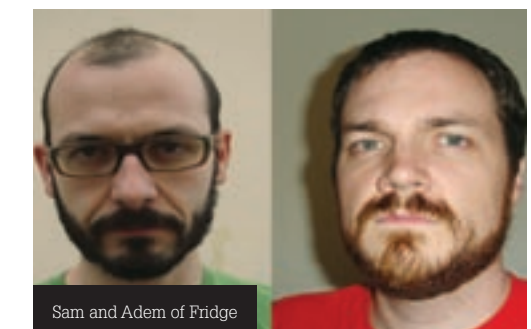
7. ARTHUR RUSSELL "Answers Me" I want the compelling atmosphere, sonic detail, and gorgeousness to go on.

8. JOANNA NEWSOM "Emily" The depth of detail in the arrangements, performance, and lyrics demands my full attention.

9. BATTLES "Atlas" Innovative and inspiring, with beauty and balls.

10. MILES DAVIS "Shh/Peaceful" It doesn't get much better than this.

Fridge's *The Sun (Temporary Residence)* is out now. www.temporaryresidence.com



SIGNAL TO NOISE

DIGITALISM STRIVES FOR
STRATOSPHERIC, RAW-SOUNDING
HOUSE MUSIC THAT ACTUALLY
MEANS SOMETHING.

WORDS ANDREW PARKS PHOTOS PIPER FERGUSON





Little-to-no lighting or ventilation. Borrowed gear. Sensitive circuit breakers. A sketchy, ex-con landlord. A five-dollar strobe light. Welcome to Digitalism's first fully functioning but decidedly low-budget studio, a converted World War II bunker right in the middle of a retirement community in Hamburg, Germany. In other words: a suffocating, isolationist environment better suited for a one-man doomcore band than a pair of club-trotting, night-crawling DJs/producers. Or so it seems.

"You can definitely get pretty depressed in the bunker," says Jens "Jence" Moelle, one-half of Digitalism, along with longtime friend Ismail "Isi" Tuefekci. "It feels like a world on its own—like eternal night. On the other hand, we love the night. Like, this one time we were sitting in the dark 'n' naked bunker/studio and came up with this hook—'I have an idea that you are here'—because we were thinking of our friends outside and felt we could sense [their presence] in a way."

That line eventually evolved into the hands-in-the-air hook of "Idealistic," Digitalism's first official single and a popular inclusion in the crates of everyone from Miss Kittin to Erol Alkan since its first pressing in 2004. Walk into an electro-house party today and you'll probably hear it dropped at some point, along with other popular Digitalism singles of the past couple years such as "Zdarlight," "Jupiter Room," and the recent Rapture-esque jam "Pogo" (co-written by The Presets' drummer/keyboardist Kim Moyes), all of which were released through Paris' trusted tastemakers Kitsuné Music.

"I first heard them on a local radio station when I was driving to the airport in Sydney," says Moyes. "It was 'Zdarlight,' and I thought it was amazing. They are more like an indie

or punk band in an electronic format—much heavier and more musical [than other producers], with a great sense of harmonies."

Moyes first crossed creative paths with Digitalism soon after stumbling upon their single. Turns out Moelle had become an instant fan of the Presets track "Down Down Down" after hearing it on a friend's MySpace page and was hell-bent on remixing it. Of the final mix, Moyes says, "I thought it was an epic rock-rave anthem! I was dumbstruck, really, especially at how loud it was."

The bomb-squad nature of Digitalism's music is especially apparent during their knob-tweaking, synth-pad-slammings live sets and the greater whole of *Idealism*, their debut album for Kitsuné/Astralwerks. A banger right from the start (the crunchy, never-ending climax of "Magnets"), it feels less like a collection of proven singles padded with filler—which, given the strength of their 12"s, they easily could have gotten away with—than a well-sequenced DJ set somewhere between Daft Punk, LCD Soundsystem, and the Joy Division days of Factory Records. (Think the floor-rushing seamlessness of Soulwax's *Nite Versions*, only not as homogenous.)

"We wanted the album to be a



“We don’t feel comfortable with average stuff, and other people shouldn’t either.”
—Jens Moelle

complete first insight into the Digitalism universe—something that feels like a book or a movie with different chapters,” explains Moelle. “We didn’t want to do just a compilation of tracks or build some useless material around the singles that we’ve released so far *just to have an album*. We want to be a band, not just producers, you know?”

THE HOUSE THAT PARIS BUILT

While Digitalism’s music certainly stands on its own in the increasingly crowded realm of electro-house/synths-as-guitars singles (see Boys Noize, Justice, Surkin), the duo’s back-story is quite typical. It goes a little something like this: A couple of teenagers forge a friendship while working amid elder DJ statesmen at a record shop and distro company specializing in house—music they first heard in 1993 on a weekly radio show simply called The Dance Charts. (Moelle and Tuefekci were 11 and 14, respectively, at the time.)

“That record store was one of the most chaotic, yet human, spaces we’ve ever seen,” explains Moelle. “It was located underneath the main railroad tracks in Hamburg, so every few seconds the whole thing felt like an earthquake; the front door was made of old metal, so it expanded during the summer and shrank a bit during the winter; and the big house legends from those days performed right in the store—in a booth where I usually dumped empty pizza boxes—like Dimitri From Paris, the Basement Boys, and Sandy Rivera.”

Stellar, intimate DJ sets weren’t the only thing Digitalism soaked up while working at the store. They also amassed stacks of white labels and soon-to-be-hot filtered and French singles to spin around Hamburg. Once their selections ceased to be challenging, the pair broadened their playlist with raw edits of songs like The White Stripes’ “Seven Nation Army” (later pressed as a now out-of-print 12-inch)—edits somehow pulled off on a computer with a 133 MHz processor

and basic, WAV-based Music Maker software. (Moelle’s father actually worked for a major IT company when he was a kid, meaning the family owned a massive laptop years before the general public knew what such a thing looked like. It’s also a major reason why he’s Digitalism’s resident tech geek.)

After the whole editing routine ran its course, Moelle and Tuefekci built Digitalism’s aforementioned bunker studio with the help of a friend, and started turning some of Moelle’s homemade beats and synth lines into actual songs, aided in part by Tuefekci’s own self-proclaimed “ear for the dancefloor.”

“All we wanted to do at first was get one piece of vinyl out,” says Moelle, referring to their tweaked White Stripes track.

I ask him how well that first single did and the mostly mute Tuefekci cracks a smile. “We pressed a lot; don’t ask,” he says. “We meant it mostly as a move of, ‘Hello, we are here. Pay attention!’”

DIRTY DEEDS

Kitsuné’s ears were pricked immediately. They signed Digitalism soon after their official formation, releasing “Idealistic” and “Zdarlight” on pricey, appropriately loud import platters in 2005.

“People went crazy the first time [Masaya Kuroki and I] played ‘Idealistic,’ so I immediately told their manager I wanted to work with Digitalism,” says Gildas Loaëc, Kitsuné’s main A&R man and a former artistic director for Daft Punk. “Jens and Isi are genius producers—they have the energy of dance music with the strong writing and emotion of pop, which helps them stand out from every other act around.”

One of the main reasons why Digitalism’s music sounds like such a strong fusion of dance and pop aesthetics is the duo’s blatant dismissal of house—easily their favorite genre during the ‘90s—right after Y2K hit. “House became boring,” Moelle bluntly states. “It was so hi-fi and flawless, which has never been our thing, so that’s when we started looking for different stuff that would suit our need for freaky, rough stuff better.”

Digitalism found hope in everything from RZA’s “very edgy and dirty” early productions for the Wu-Tang Clan to The Rapture’s pivotal dance/rock tipping point, “House of Jealous Lovers.” They were even inspired by the stronger side of electroclash, which, like it or not, got cool kids to uncross their arms and dance like complete buffoons well before Ed Banger and Kitsuné cemented their crossover status.

Speaking of being ahead of the curve, much of their debut *Idealism* was also written years before Justice and MSTRKRFT

set dancefloors and rock-show after-parties ablaze. Digitalism insists they won't change their sound to counteract what's fast becoming the trendiest genre since, well, electroclash, because doing so would be "dishonest." It's hard to imagine why they would need to, what with the way *Idealism* references everything from New Order to Underground Resistance to Alan Braxe.

"Of course we're excited that one of our favorite electronic sub-genres just reappeared," says Moelle. "It's that old sound but advanced—very futuristic, melodic, and stompy—yet sometimes it can be a bit too much. People often tend to rape a genre to death by denying there's other great sounds in the musical spectrum as well. So, it's an exciting sound, but don't jump with your whole body into it."

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Take a quick look at the song titles on *Idealism's* sleeve (sci-fi nonsense like "Jupiter Room," "Apollo Gize," and "Moonlight") and it's easy to assume that Digitalism set out to record nothing but a memorable, intro-to-out indie-dance album. Ask them about the ideology behind *Idealism*, though, and you'll get a carefully cultivated mission statement that's quite serious and deliberate.

"Digitalism seeks the great, yet exciting unknown," explains Moelle. "We want to encourage people to head for ideals and goals in life. It's like a mood of departure and launch. Digitalism means ones and zeroes, all or nothing, so we don't feel comfortable

with average stuff. People shouldn't either. *Idealism* can sometimes be hard but very honest, whether it's love and friendship or just ideal food."

To achieve the best possible album, Digitalism was heavily involved in every step of the process, right down to a painstaking photography and painting process for *Idealism's* cover earlier this year.

"We met with a photographer and the Kitsuné artwork team from London to paint the tracklisting in our usual way of writing onto a large canvas—to take pictures of it and use it for the flipside of the album artwork," says Moelle. "It's a pity we just changed the whole tracklisting a few weeks later for the last time.

"So we had to do all this again," he adds. "As we didn't have much time, we had to do it in London's Fabric club between other bands' soundchecks—on the floor and in socks so the canvas wouldn't get dirty. It was very funny though."

Digitalism's Idealism is out now on Astralwerks in the U.S., and Kitsuné in Europe. www.myspace.com/digitalism, www.astralwerks.com
Shot on location in Palm Springs, CA. Special thanks to Eric Szmanda for the use of his home.

Sounds of Summer

Digitalism's top space-disco and dance-rock jams for diamond nights.

1. Digitalism "Pogo" (Astralwerks/Kitsuné)
This song just means a lot to us at the moment

2. Poni Hoax "Involutive Star" (Tigersushi)
Amazing guitar riff and vocals

3. Feist "Sea Lion (Chromeo Rmx)" (Universal)
Nice groove and melody

4. Jence "Wired" (Kitsuné)
Since WMC, we know that people want to get "Wired"

5. Hadouken "That Boy That Girl" (Kitsuné)
Rolling Stones meets The Prodigy!

6. Hystereo "Gonna Love You" (Soma)
Ear candy from our Irish friends

7. Eyerer & Chopstick Feat. Zdar "Make my Day (Isi-E. Edit) (CD-R)
Old Crydamoure style

8. Escort "Bright New Life (Morgan Geist re-edit)" (Escort)
Wonderful, smooth groove music

9. Does It Offend You Yeah "Weird Science" (Virgin)
Go nuts

10. Jesse Rose "Everything Standard (Mustapha 3000 remix)" (Dubsided)
A body-killer



Digitalism's Isi Tuefekci (left) and Jens Moelle



THE NEW 2008 xB.

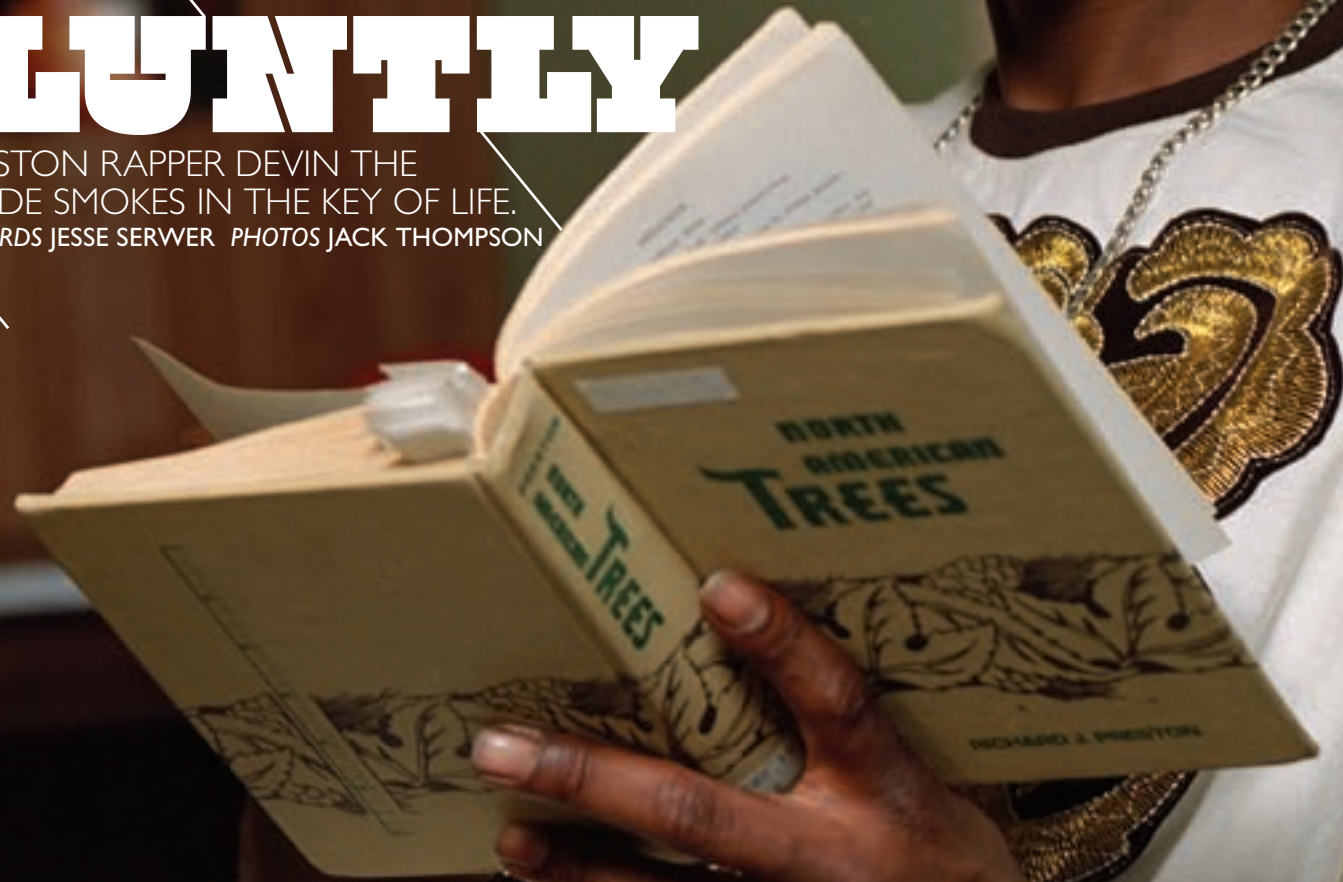
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what moves you

TO PUT IT BLUNTLY

HOUSTON RAPPER DEVIN THE
DUDE SMOKES IN THE KEY OF LIFE.
WORDS JESSE SERWER PHOTOS JACK THOMPSON



It all started with a race.

Devin Copeland was in the sixth grade, chilling with his friend Boomer after school when the other boy pulled out a joint.

"I'm not gonna smoke weed!" Devin the Dude remembers telling his friend, mimicking the breathless speech of a 12-year-old as he recalls his life's turning point. "I was like, 'I'm gonna play football and basketball and... I don't need to be smoking, it makes you slow.' So he said, 'Make you slow? I can beat you running.' He smoked cigarettes, too, so I was like, 'You're crazy, let's go.' Well, he shot right past me. So, after that, I was like, 'Let me hit that.'"

As the boys got to smoking that J, Boomer told Devin how his father and his uncle hid their pot habit from his mother by referring to their frequent disappearances outside as "coffee breaks."

"I always remembered that story and when my group Odd Squad started recording, we did a song called 'Coughee' on our album," Devin recalls, forcing a cough to emphasize his preferred spelling. "We just kept saying 'coughee' all the time, and eventually we became the Coughee Brothaz. Now everybody who comes through the studio to work or to smoke with us becomes a coughee brotha. It's a state of mind—you don't even have to smoke weed."

Twenty-five years after that first (presumably mind-blowing) joint, we're at Coughee Brothaz headquarters, a studio in a small industrial park in the Houston suburb of Bellaire. Though it's only a few hours after his late performance the previous night at local spot Club Rio, Devin is already seated at the mixing console. Bud Light and bud-filled Swisher Sweets at hand, he cues up "The Real Thing," a freshly recorded track intended for an upcoming Coughee Brothaz compilation. While the Brothaz that are present—Devin's longtime DJ and veteran producer Domo, Jugg Mugg of Odd Squad, E-Rock of H-Town O.G.s 5th Ward Boyz, and a few other associates—have presumably heard "The Real Thing" before, the song's hook instantly cracks the room up. "It might swing but it don't swang," the chorus complains. "It might be hung, but it don't hang."

Far from a traditional sex rap, "The Real Thing" tackles a very modern problem: What happens when your woman discovers she can get more pleasure from her pocket rocket than your manhood. It's classic Devin the Dude: X-rated, goofy, and completely original.

What other rapper is writing songs about losing to a dildo?

WAITIN' TO INHALE

For someone who's recorded with just about all of Houston's platinum-selling rappers (Mike Jones,

Chamillionaire, Paul Wall) and can count both Dr. Dre's *The Chronic 2001* and the Jay-Z/R. Kelly album *Best of Both Worlds* on his resume, Devin the Dude remains relatively unknown to mainstream rap audiences, even in his hometown. Which is why it's strange to hear "What a Job," a track from his latest album, *Waitin' to Inhale*, on the radio while en route to his studio on this Monday afternoon. Nine years and four solo albums into his solo career, the closest thing to a breakout single Devin has had was "Lacville '79," an ode to his trusty Cadillac Seville from 2002's *Just Tryin' Ta Live*, which, at best, got a few video spins on *Rap City* before fading away. But "What a Job"—with its guest verses from Andre 3000 and Snoop Dogg and a cathartic, perfectly paced beat produced by Chaka Khan's nephew Chuck Heat—is Devin's most accessible, radio-friendly song to date.

In typical Dude fashion, the song started out as a lark.

"It was a skit at first, a PSA for people who want to be rappers, telling them about the job," Devin explains. "I did one verse, the hook came in and it faded out—that's how I had it but people were saying 'It oughta be a whole song.' But I didn't want to just do the whole song myself—I wanted to kinda have different points of view. [My label, Rap-A-Lot] asked me, 'Who would you want to get on there?' and I was like, 'I don't know, maybe someone like Andre or Snoop.' I always wanted to work with Andre and I loved working with Snoop on Dre's album. A lot of phone calls were made and those guys ended up blessing me with their verses and sending them right back. That was real cool of them..."

THE DUDE

The story of how Devin became The Dude—everyman rapper, lovable scoundrel, self-deprecating motivator—begins in St. Petersburg, Florida, where a young Devin used to stay up late at night sneaking listens to dirty records by Richard Pryor and Blowfly, as well as R&B like Quincy Jones ("That's where 'The Dude' comes from," he says. "I loved Quincy Jones' record *The Dude*. My first album was called *The Dude* by Devin, but after that, people just started calling me Devin the Dude").

After his family relocated to Texas during his adolescence, he shuttled back and forth between the South Side of Houston and New Boston, a rural town near Arkansas where Devin befriended the rednecks who would later serve as the inspiration for the "Country Dude" that periodically appears on his recordings (see *Just Tryin's* "R&B" and *Waitin' to Inhale's* "Boom" skits). Along with blind rapper Rob Quest and longtime friend Jugg Mugg, Devin would form Odd Squad in the early '90s, linking with Rap-

"I cut down a bit, too—I went from Budweiser to Bud Light."





“You’ll see when it’s time to change.”

A-Lot Records through DJ Screw, their part-time DJ at the time. Odd Squad’s 1994 debut LP, *Fadanuf Fa Erybody!!*, sold poorly, however, and the group was put on hold. (The three still appear together on Devin songs like “She Want That Money,” and plan to finally release a second Odd Squad album next year.)

TO THA EX-TREME

Urged by Scarface to make a solo album, Devin completed *The Dude* in 1998. Excellent, though much overlooked, the album was probably best known at the time for its cover photo of Devin on the toilet, reading a newspaper called the *Houston Chronic*. Guest spots on Dr. Dre’s *The Chronic 2001* and De La Soul’s *AOI: Bionix* soon followed, raising Devin’s industry profile and introducing him to audiences outside the South. By 2002, when he dropped the now-classic *Just Tryin’ ta Live*, he had settled into his role as the pot-smoking, skirt-chasing oddity amidst Rap-A-Lot’s cadre of syrup-swilling H-Town Gs. While pot and pussy remained Devin’s *raison d’être*, songs like “Doobie Ashtray” and “Fa Sho” showcased his sensitive side, distilling life lessons through hilarious, sometimes sad vignettes and anecdotes.

To the Extreme followed two years later, solidifying Devin’s newfound hipster fanbase while pushing his music in an even more ruminative direction.

“I had a nice time doing the last album but that fun wasn’t there—on *Waitin’ to Inhale*, we tried to bring the fun back into it,” Devin explains, referring to *To the Extreme*’s slow, woozy pace. “We smoked a better quality of weed,” Devin explains. “I cut down a bit, too—I went from Budweiser to Bud Light. And we smoke out of the vaporizer now, which is much healthier—it cuts out the tobacco from the cigars.”

JUST TRYIN’ TA LIVE

Given Devin’s proclivity for x-rated raps and juvenile humor, it’s somewhat eye-opening to learn that not only is he 37 years old but he’s also the happily married father of four, including a 15- and a 16-year-old. That information, combined with the success of more mature-sounding *Waitin’ to Inhale* tracks like “What a Job” and “Lil Girl Gone” (the Bun B- and Lil Wayne-guested track that’s the album’s first single), might lead you to believe that Devin is starting to take his craft a little more seriously. Devin would beg to differ.

“I try not to look for new ways to do things because you get redirected sometimes,” Devin says of his commitment to staying true to his affable persona. “You’ll see when it’s time to change—it’ll come to you. But if you’re just fitting to go make a change and do this and that, and you don’t just stick to a solid plan, it’s not going to work out. There will always be something where you’re like, ‘Did you hear that new fresh thing that they just did?’ It’s a matter of being yourself, doing you, being willing to change and also to accept what you can’t change.”

One step to the left that Devin—an avowed fan of Willie Nelson, Ronnie Milsap, and The Oak Ridge Boys—is planning is a country album with longtime collaborator and producer Mike Dean. And you can bet the redneck from “R&B” (a.k.a. “Reefer and Beer”) and the “Boom” skits will be showing up.

“The paperwork ain’t looking right for him—Country Dude don’t want to sign shit,” Devin jokes. “He’s just in it for the music. Comes from the heart, he says.”

Waitin’ to Inhale is out now on Rap-A-Lot Records. www.rapalotrecords.com, www.myspace.com/devinthedude

Sounds of Sumner

H-Town player Devin the Dude breaks down his nice ‘n’ smooth summer soundtrack.

1. Isley Brothers “Summer Breeze”

That song makes me think of traveling anywhere with the windows down, just smiling, feeling good and worry-free with the sun in your face, wind in your hair, music up.

2. DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince “Summertime”

When Will Smith came out, back in the day, sounding all proper, I remember thinking, ‘This is corny.’ “Summertime” was the first song he did where I was like ‘Okay, he might be pretty cool.’ I’ll put that with “Summer Madness” by Kool & the Gang and listen to both of them back to back.

3. Frankie Beverly and Maze “Happy Feelings”

That’s that picnic, family reunion-type music right there.

4. DJ Screw “June 27 (Freestyle)”

That’s a summertime favorite out here in Houston. The dudes with the candy-coated cars drop their tops and just let that whole thing run—it’s like 30 minutes long.

5. The O’Jays “I Love Music”

I don’t know why but I just like listening to The O’Jays in the summer.



NEVER MIND THE MIRROR BALLS AND POLYESTER. A NEW BREED OF BANDS ADOPTS INFLUENCES FROM THE 1970S UNDERGROUND.

ILLUSTRATIONS COLIN STRANDBERG

For as long as we've been alive, the '70s have been lampooned via strap-on Afros, bad pimp costumes, and sketch comedy gags set to pop-disco anthems like "Y.M.C.A." and "It's Raining Men." But the decade also gave us a veritable bible full of real musical heroes. And thanks to the magic of the internet, reissue labels, and used record stores, those too young or too geographically challenged to have partied at the Paradise Garage, pogoed at CBGB's, or posed at Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco can now have infinite knowledge of all the obscure and wondrous 1970s music that fell through the cracks. This uncovered history has birthed a slew of new bands whose sound is underpinned by the soaring synths and space effects of '70s disco, but incorporates other decade-specific touches (punk-funk vocals, prog-rock solos) into the mix. Bedroom knob-twiddlers be damned, because these four bands really get live. *Vivian Host*



ZOMBI

UNLIKELY ITALO SOUNDSCAPES FROM THE LAND OF PIEROGI AND PUNK ROCK.

Zombi is Steve Moore, 32, and A.E. Paterra, 29, a couple of band guys from Pittsburgh, PA who make dynamic, spacey prog-rock sagas perfect for long hours spent beating pinball games and driving around stoned in the wizard van. Inspired by '70s synth pioneers like Vangelis, Silver Apples, and Jan Hammer (the man behind the *Miami Vice* soundtrack), the duo amassed a decent collection of analog synths—to the point where friends began half-jokingly suggesting they make some disco tracks. Moore took up the challenge, creating “Sapphire” and “Long Mirrored Corridor,” two roiling outer-space Italo-disco numbers that nod to '70s Italian horror-movie soundtracks by the likes of PFM and Goblin.

Moore—who is more likely to hang out with Relapse Records labelmates like Dillinger Escape Plan or Cephalic Carnage than disco nerds—was surprised when he received a frenzy of calls from friends who had heard “Sapphire” on the Cybernetic Broadcasting System, the definitive underground disco radio show broadcast out of The Hague by I-F and the rest of the Viewlxxx posse. Though Moore is stoked people like the tracks, he’s not ready to trade in his hard-rock scene card for an Italo-disco laminate quite yet.

“I like to be a little bit wary and not immerse myself too much in all this music,” says the former music student. “Sometimes people can get too caught up in collecting music and then there’s no creativity anymore. There’s too much influence. I’ll go for huge, long periods of time without listening to anything sometimes, just to spark some ideas.”

But don’t get the idea that the Zombi boys aren’t under the influence—they’ve been proud to copy their heroes from the beginning. “A.E. and I were playing in different no wave bands when we discovered that we were into a lot of older progressive rock and film scores, plus John Carpenter and Rush, and we deliberately set out to make music that referenced these things. A lot of bands will say that they’re influenced by composers and artists, but you never hear it in their music. We wanted to be more literal in our influences.” *Vivian Host* Photo *Shawn Brackbill*

www.zombi.us



NEW YOUNG PONY CLUB

DISCO-PUNK MEETS BLONDIE AND BOWIE ON THE HIGH STREET.

New Young Pony Club is the kind of band that inspires multitudes of ill-fitting hyphenates. Some say dance-punk, some say post-disco, some even summon that mysterious new compound known as nu-rave. Nobody knows quite what to do with the tarted-up little sister The Slits never had, and the naughty girlfriend Tom Tom Club always wanted.

Frontwoman Tahita Bulmer says she’s happy to occupy the in-between spaces. “We’re massive fans of Blondie and Bowie; we love that cross-pollination between genres. It was only a matter of time before disco and punk discovered each other at the back of the club; both of those scenes [were] about exuberance and hedonism, a bit of nihilism.”

On record, New Young Pony Club is more dancefloor than squat party, with lots of pop appeal and post-DFA studio polish. Hardly surprising, given that NYPC was a studio project first. Bulmer and guitarist Andy Spence had been casually writing music together in Spence’s studio for a couple years when they decided to print 1,000 copies of “Ice Cream” on Nuphonic offshoot Tirk. The single sold out in three days, leaving the flummoxed duo with a press following before they even had a set list.

After putting together a proper band—including Lou Hayter on keys, Igor Volk on bass, and drummer Sarah Jones—the London outfit signed to Modular and released its first, self-titled EP, a briskly churning mix of tightly wound guitars and marching cowbells massaged by Bulmer’s laconic, bedroom-eyed sing-speak. Its three tracks, already club-ready in their own right, lend themselves instinctively to techno re-rubs, as evidenced by “Ice Cream” remixes from Comets, Van She, and DJ Mehdi.

So is it punk-funk or nu-rave? “Labels can be misnomers, but it’s just a way to re-brand indie bands that make dance music. It’s great, actually, because it means people are interested again in the bands that didn’t get any attention the first time around.” *Anna Balkrishna*

New Young Pony Club’s debut will be out this summer on Modular/Island. “The Bomb,” with remixes from Phones, The Teenagers, and Kaos, is out now on Island UK. www.werepony.com, www.myspace.com/newyoungponyclub



TOMBOY BARFOD

WITH TOMBOY AND WHOMADEWHO, THIS DANE TAKES LIVE ELECTRO-DISCO OFF THE GRID.

Now that LCD Soundsystem and !!! are staples on retail compilations from Forever 21 to Diesel, it's only a matter of time before the kids catch on to Copenhagen's live disco trio WhoMadeWho. Helmed by DJ/producer Tomas Barfod (a.k.a. Tomboy)—a drummer since age 10—they spew forth energetic, humanistic disco rooted in loose live drumming, incessantly grooving basslines, and raw vocals. They also do some mean cover versions, as evidenced by their 2004 12" "Two Covers for Your Party," where they turned Benny Benassi's "Satisfaction" into a roiling punk-funk number and Mr. Oizo's "Flat Beat" into a jangly circus of plucky bass and jitterbug synths.

Despite the heaps of new technology available, Tomboy and WhoMadeWho records are crafted in truly underground fashion, which perhaps accounts for their vital, occasionally shambolic feel. "They're made on a cracked version of Logic 4.7 on a Mac running OS 9, which is *soooo* old school," jokes Barfod via email.

Though it's only been a few years since its inception, WhoMadeWho—which consists of Tomas Hoefding (bass, vocals), Jeppe Kjellberg (guitar, vocals), and Barfod on drums—drew extreme praise with their self-titled 2005 debut (followed in 2006 by *Green Versions*, a beatless, space-rock reworking of the record). Since then, their raw, hybrid disco has garnered many admirers, from the Get Physical and Turbo labels to Josh Homme of Queens of the Stone Age, who covered their groove-heavy "Space for Rent."

"The biggest disadvantage [of balancing two projects] is that I can't be in two places at one time," says Barfod of his love for touring. "I like the direct contact with people and my co-musicians. The best thing is when you can [turn] a crowd from tired and lazy to wild and crazy just by taking the raw simplicity of club music and cutting it down to the essentials." *Fred Miketa*

Tomboy's *Serius* (Gomma) is out now. www.whomadewho.dk, www.gomma.de



ESCORT

A BROOKLYN BAND REAPS DISCO'S HIDDEN TIMELESSNESS.

A proud NYC disco band, with no samplers in sight, may give some people nightmares about the '70s. Not that Escort could care. "[Disco] does have a lot of negative connotations for a lot of folks, but not for us," says the band's keyboardist/guitarist/engineer Dan Balis.

Truly, Escort's live disco proves they know the sound front to back—connecting the dots between DJ Nicky Siano's all-nighters at The Gallery, Chic's minimalist grace, and the cigarettes and sweat of the Paradise Garage. Their debut single, "Starlight," turned heads last year for its faithfulness to Carter-era disco and early electro. Legendary Hacienda DJ Greg Wilson will soon release his re-edit of "Starlight," and Morgan Geist and The Rapture have shared the love

by remixing Escort tunes. "It reminds me of Jay Dee's 'Plastic Dreams' meeting Baltimore club, but in a really good way," says Balis of The Rapture's version.

Escort formed in 2005 when several musicians began jamming with DJs who loved to spin disco. The band's tastes ranged from Gino Soccio and Kid Creole and the Coconuts to old-school disco released on the Prelude, West End, and Cerrone labels. They recorded their first singles in various bandmates' apartments, but soon ditched their sampler for actual musicians.

"It's really limiting to use samples," Balis says. "With real strings you can make them play the notes you want them to play."

"And you can ask a drummer to play a million drum

fills," adds keyboardist Eugene Cho.

"We've got great musicians," continues Balis. "We give them a sketch and they'll bring something amazing that's all their own to it."

Escort has self-released all their singles, and they're currently working on a debut album. "We're pretty meticulous and obsessed with how everything comes out," says Balis. But don't expect any mirror balls or flared trousers here. When asked if there's any polyester involved in an Escort show, Balis quickly replies, "Oh, God no." *Cameron Macdonald*

Escort's fourth single, "All Through the Night," is out now on Escort. www.weareescort.com

TOGETHER ALL ALONE

PAUL "STRATEGY" DICKOW IS A CORNERSTONE OF THE CASCADIA MUSIC SCENE. SO WHY IS HE PINING FOR A PORTLAND OF THE PAST?
WORDS PATRICK SISSON PHOTOS SIMON MAX HILL





"I think what he's doing is almost meta-Portland."
- Scott MacLean, Holocene

You might call the lush, liberal landscape that stretches from Portland through Seattle and British Columbia the "Pacific Northwest." But to some it's Cascadia—a name that is both a reference to the region and a part of a shorthand, half-joking slogan (Free Cascadia!) for a particular state of mind, if not a proposed state. Cascadia celebrates a community of freedom and open-mindedness—and it's not just a hippie hangover from the surplus of quality local bud.

CASCADIAN RHYTHMS

For more than a decade, Paul Dickow—best known as Strategy—has been engaged in a musical free-for-all that exemplifies a true edge-dwelling mindset. A founder of the aptly titled Community Library label—an ambitiously experimental imprint that branches out into abstract electronics and rock and free jazz—Dickow is also a zealous and eclectic collaborator, even by Portland's standards. He's played keyboards in the un-tethered trio Fontanelle, jammed in spacey post-rock ensemble Nudge, drummed for art-punk band Emergency, alongside

the fluid, roomy electronic tracks he creates as Strategy. Add in numerous remixes and singles for labels like Orac and his DJ gigs (as P. Disco), and it becomes clear that, fiercely independent streak notwithstanding, Dickow is a unifying force in Cascadia.

"Paul's always been supportive of what other people have been doing," says Scott MacLean, owner of Portland club Holocene. "Interestingly, that hasn't been necessarily reciprocated by other people. I think what he's doing is almost meta-Portland, and weirdly underappreciated by most Portlanders."

TIME TRAVEL

On the new Strategy record, *Future Rock*, Dickow does himself one better by not just integrating different styles, but meshing past and present. At a time when many of his live projects are dormant and his city is gentrifying and changing—a recent *New York Times* article awkwardly praised the worldliness beneath Portland's "fleece-clad and Teva-wearing exterior"—Dickow composed the record while reflecting on the only recently deceased "golden age" of Portland's music scene.

"It was a time when it was a little more funky and there was a lot more experimentation," he says, referring to the city in the late '90s and early '00s. "There was kind of a 'fuck you' attitude. You could count on a lot more musical feedback. I idealize this time period."

"When I see someone here who says they like kayaking and bands with super-long jams, I'm like, 'I forgot you exist!'" says Portland musician Paul Dickow. "It's really edgy here now."

The dub textures and windswept, narcotic echoes on *Future Rock*—a refinement of the sonic palette of 2004's disc *Drumsolo's Delight*—could easily inspire nostalgic moods. But it's the recordings of long-gone jam sessions integrated into the mix—the 30-year-old Dickow has an insane collection of old MiniDisc recordings—that really link it to the past.

"It reminds me of a certain charmed set of ideas I had about what was happening

around me," he says of listening to the old tapes. "I'm paying tribute to those by writing really honest, interesting music."

Be it the noodling guitar melodies floating atop shimmering backgrounds on "Running on Empty" or the recovered practice-session drum loops that emerge during "Sunfall (Interlude)," Dickow says his use of old material is part of a larger, continuing effort—a attempt to make something pop out of something that's not.

"Seeing him put all these techniques together and playing solo riffs, it's like he let his playing ability back in," reveals Brian Foote, a longtime friend and Nudge collaborator, and now the publicist at Kranky, the label that released *Future Rock*. "Part of what the album reveals is that he has all these musical threads, which you could call some kind of dilettantism. But here he fleshes everything out to its fullest."

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

Dickow, who has the passion to back his strong opinions, has never been one to just dabble. He grew up in Idaho before moving to Portland, obsessed with whatever '80s synth-pop he could catch on Top 40 radio. His father was a composer and amateur computer programmer, so Dickow was surrounded by plenty of vintage synthesizers, but he focused on the music of Pet Shop Boys and Kraftwerk. He once returned a copy of New Order's *Brotherhood* to the record store because he didn't think it had enough synthesizers or drum machines.

"I'm pretty skeptical of rock music," he says. "It has to be very genuine and original to win me over. I think the first kind of guitar music I really accepted was My Bloody Valentine."

In 1998, Dickow started programming and playing around Portland as Strategy. While simultaneously multitasking between bands, he eventually decided to refine his knowledge of electronic music by learning to mix and beat-match.

"You can't all of a sudden write a Daft Punk-sounding track and say you're house," Dickow said. "You have to learn to mix

records and learn about Chicago and all that stuff first.”

In 2003, he took lessons from DJ Brokenwindow (a.k.a. Solenoid, born David Chandler), his friend, eventual label partner, and a veteran of the Portland electronic scene. The two record junkies soon began spinning in clubs together, and the idea to collaborate on wildly eclectic sets linked by uncommon, abstract themes began to percolate. This turned into a regular night called Community Library, whose musical themes would eventually include war protests, songs about the color yellow, and even crime and punishment, (which consisted of tunes referencing different vices). Those nights inspired the formation of the label of the same name in 2005.

“That label is the best thing going in Portland now,” exclaims Michael Byrne, a music writer for the local *Willamette Week* newspaper. “[It’s] emblematic of the musical character of Portland, or at least fits that kind of perspective.”

Like Dickow’s music, Community Library’s output is wildly diverse, ranging from the soul jazz of Jeffrey Leighton Brown to a forthcoming series of 10-inch reggae singles featuring Chicago-based Zulu.

“The only common thread is that there’s no thread,” muses Foote. “I think that’s a strong point of Community Library. It’s an obvious testament to [Paul’s] listening habits and the breadth of his influences.”

Strategy’s *Future Rock* is out now on Kranky. www.community-library.net, www.kranky.net

Sounds of Summer

Strategy’s decks quake with liquid ambient jams and outer-space booty shakers.

1. Theo Parrish “Summertime is Here” (*Sound Signature*)

The last couple summers, I’ve brought this record out when it starts warming up. In Portland, that isn’t until around July 4, but it still works. It’s a classic house set-starter with a summertime mantra vocal.

2. Solenoid “Drack Soul” (*Orac*)

This came out at the end of last summer, but it’s still the most triumphant outer-space acid track for a summertime dance party. This will definitely be in my crate all summer long.

3. Jan Steele “All Day” (*Community Library*)

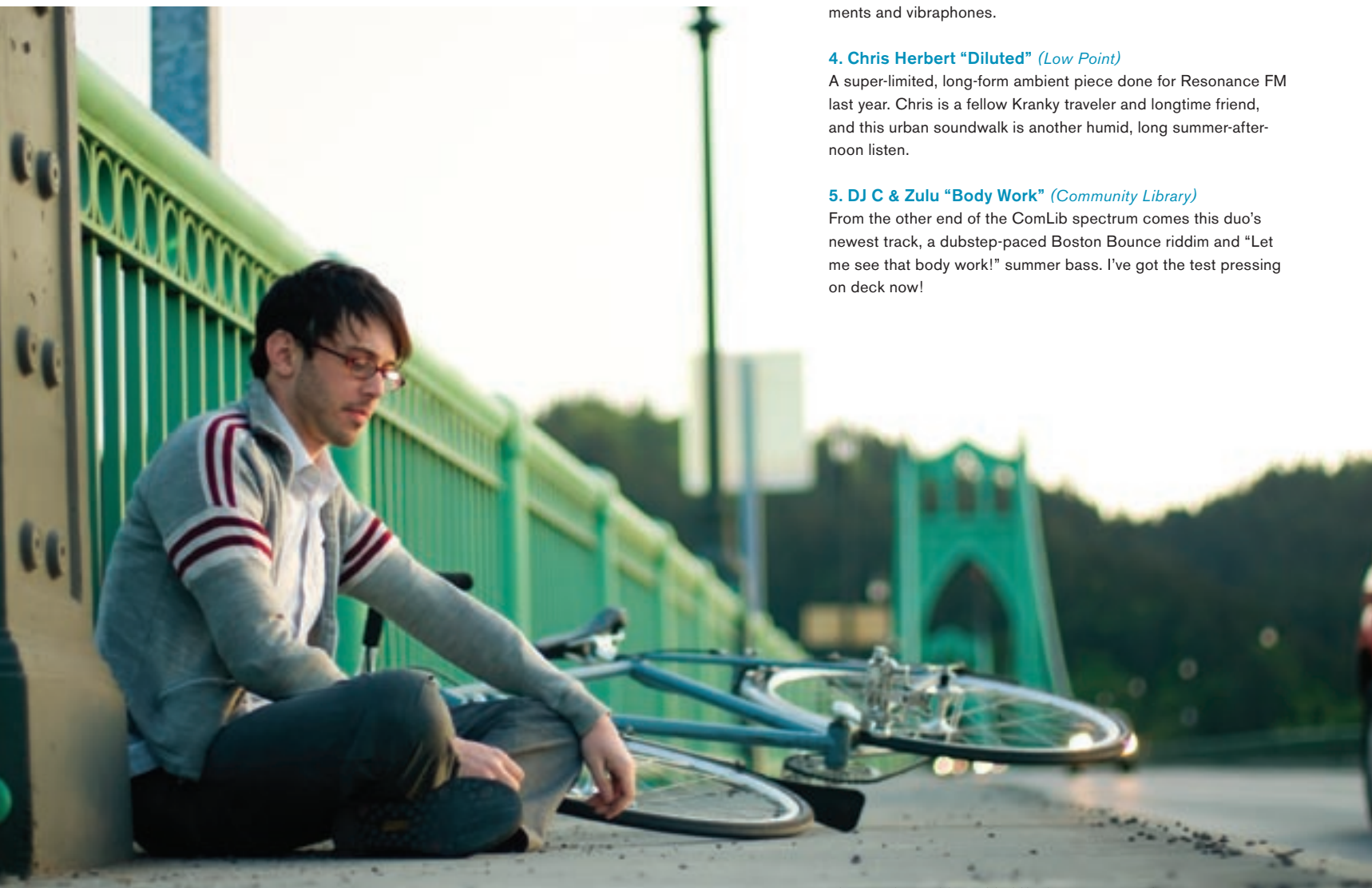
This languid music from the 1970s, set to be re-released on Community Library later this year, is a cross between understated British jazz and liquid chamber music on electric rock instruments and vibraphones.

4. Chris Herbert “Diluted” (*Low Point*)

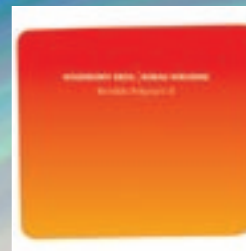
A super-limited, long-form ambient piece done for Resonance FM last year. Chris is a fellow Kranky traveler and longtime friend, and this urban soundwalk is another humid, long summer-afternoon listen.

5. DJ C & Zulu “Body Work” (*Community Library*)

From the other end of the ComLib spectrum comes this duo’s newest track, a dubstep-paced Boston Bounce riddim and “Let me see that body work!” summer bass. I’ve got the test pressing on deck now!

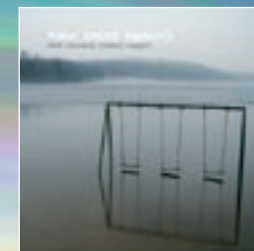


Paul recently got hit on his bike by a Toyota Prius. How Portland.



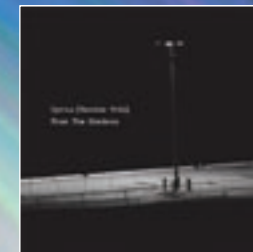
WIGHNOMY BROS./
ROBAG WRUHME
Remikks Potpourri II CD

Second volume of dance-happy remixes from **Wighnomy Bros.** and **Robag Wruhme**. Each track projects a feather-light feeling of completeness coupled with a euphoric kick. Most songs here have never appeared on CD, and as a bonus there’s an unreleased remix of **Depeche Mode**. Also including **Future Sound of London**, **Röyksopp**, **Ellen Allien** & **Apparat**, **Underworld**, **Nitzer Ebb** and **Paul Kalkbrenner**.



PORN SWORD TOBACCO
New Exclusive Olympic Heights CD/LP

For his 3rd release, **Porn Sword Tobacco (Henrik Jonsson)** explores more analog territory without losing a sense of wonder that draws comparisons to **Harold Budd**, **Marsen Jules** and **Brian Eno**. *New Exclusive Olympic Heights* is a distillation of this sound, revealing powerful ambient music that is a million miles beyond most of his peers.



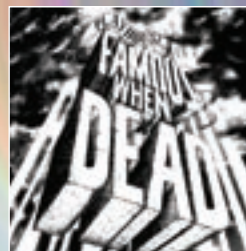
CYRUS (RANDOM TRIO)
From The Shadows CD

Tectonic delivers the debut from UK-based **Cyrus**, one of dubstep’s underrated talents. Honing his skills alongside fellow producers/DJs **Hatcha**, **Pinch** and **Digital Mystikz**, **Cyrus** blends a moody Orientalism with polyrhythmic kickdrums, strobing synthlines, and maximum bass pressure. *From The Shadows* is the magnum opus from one of dubstep’s dark souls.



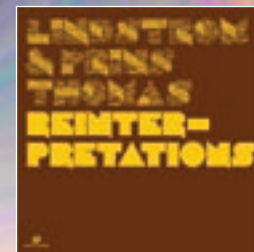
TIEFSCHWARZ
Blackmusik 2CD

Tiefschwarz celebrate 10 years of success with a 2CD compilation on their own label, **Souvenir**. Disc 1 is a mix of their influences (**Anti-Pop Consortium**, **Frankie Knuckles**, **Marianne Faithfull**), while disc 2 is an exclusive selection of their finest tracks remixed by their favorite producers (**Radio Slave**, **Kiki**, **Matias Aguayo**).



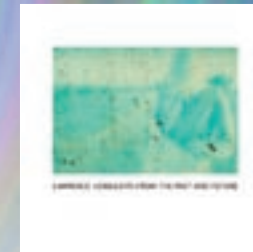
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Famous When Dead 5 CD

Playhouse continues its legendary compilation series with the 5th volume of *Famous When Dead*. Assembling the label’s 12” highlights, this time it also features some unreleased rarities by the likes of **Isoléé**, **My My** and **Einzelkind** and previously vinyl-only club-killers by **Rework**, **Losoul** and **Max Mohr**. One might pose, “Famous? Yes! Dead? No way!”



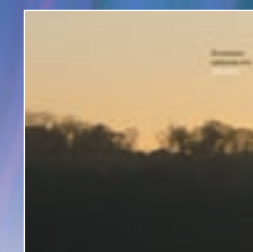
LINDSTRØM & PRINS THOMAS
Reinterpretations CD

Reinterpretations is a re-working of **Lindstrøm & Prins Thomas’** stunning 2005 debut album, which cemented their status as the Kings of Cosmic Space Disco. This collection collates alternative versions and vinyl-only B-sides and presents a more uptempo dancefloor vibe, with elements of funk, house, disco, psychedelia, Italo, boogie and beyond.



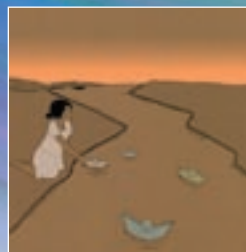
LAWRENCE
Lowlights From The Past
And Future CD

The first full-length from **Lawrence** on the Mule Electronic label presents exclusive tracks and remixes from his past and future. From releases on his own label **Dial**, **Nova Mute**, **Kompakt** and **Ghostly**, his tracks evoke the sound of a more serene **Theo Parrish**. All beats, basslines and chords are carefully chosen — a journey balancing deepness and melancholy.



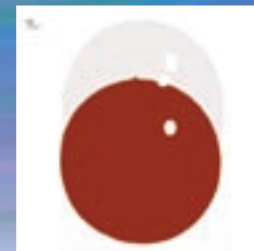
FENNEZ SAKAMOTO
Cendre CD

Cendre is the highly-anticipated collaborative release by **Christian Fennesz** and **Ryuichi Sakamoto**. Fennesz is the standard-bearer of laptop-music, and Sakamoto has been a contributing force in electronic music for almost three decades as a member of **Yellow Magic Orchestra**, as well as a solo artist. Together they have created 11 tracks of satisfying and challenging possibilities.



HELIOS
Ayres CD/LP

Boston-based multi-instrumentalist **Helios (Keith Kenniff)** has been showered with acclaim for his gauzy, cinematic sound-poems. He now takes up his most breathtaking instrument yet, his voice, combining it with the electronics of **Brian Eno** and the songwriting of the **Innocent Mission** to create a world you’ll want to escape to again and again.



ALOG
Amateur CD/2LP

Highly anticipated follow-up to their excellent album *Miniatures*, **Alog** return with their 4th release for **Rune Grammofon**. *Amateur* further refines **Alog’s** technique of melding acoustic instruments, creative sampling and electronic manipulation to musically celebrate the spirit of curiosity, exploration and playfulness. Also available as a limited 2LP vinyl edition in a gatefold sleeve.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Rekids: One 2CD

Matt Edwards (Radio Slave, etc.) is the techno producer/remixer of the moment, so it’s no surprise his **Rekid’s** imprint has become one of the hottest electronic labels in its short life. This 140-minute compilation of label highlights and unreleased mixes features heavyweights **Claude VonStroke**, **Jesse Rose**, **Prins Thomas**, **Roman Flügel**, and many others.



DEADBEAT
Journeyman’s Annual CD/2LP

Deadbeat aka **Scott Monteith** follows up 2005’s critically-acclaimed *New World Observer* with his fourth release on **Stefan Betke’s** ~scape label. This is an updated **Deadbeat** sound, with modern bass music that moves asses and stimulates minds. A sign of things to come from electronic music’s premier low-end prophet.

These titles available at fine independent record stores or online at www.forcedexposure.com
Retailers: request wholesale information from fe@forcedexposure.com



HEART OF DARK- NESS

ON *BURN YOUR OWN CHURCH*, ARNAUD REBOTINI REINCARNATES BLACK STROBE AS BANGING ELECTRO'S FIRST BLACK METAL BAND... OR IS IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND?

WORDS ANDREW PARKS
PHOTOS PAUL O'VALLE



“I am too much
and he is too less.”

A guy that guzzles the blood of virgins at the dinner table—that’s what I expected when meeting Arnaud Rebotini for a few mid-afternoon drinks.

Why? The imposing but intriguing Black Strobe frontman could pass for a biker or convicted felon; not to mention, the considerable amount of dancefloor havoc he and former production partner Ivan Smagghe have wreaked over the last 10 years, releasing bloodied and bruised electro-techno tracks like “Chemical Sweet Girl” and “Nazi Trance Fuck Off”—their sepia-toned sleeves and living-dead cover art guarding music that shows an unhealthy obsession with black metal, Afrika Bambaataa, and the darker side of Deep Dish. (Yes, Deep Dish. Rebotini un-ironically namechecks the mega-club-dwelling Washington, DC deep house duo as an influence.)

DEATH BECOMES HIM

“I’m tired of people saying Black Strobe is dark,” says Rebotini, smiling as he genially sips a tall glass of ginger ale in D.B.A., a dimly lit microbrew paradise on New York’s Lower East Side. “Neil Young is dark; Johnny Cash is dark. We’ve got more of a melancholic feeling.”

He’s half right. Rebotini doesn’t appear melancholic or dark at the moment. You might even say he’s playing the part of the polite Parisian—a calm and calculating intellectual as likely to listen to Norwegian black metal band Mayhem as he is to controversial composer Karlheinz Stockhausen, a noted favorite of everyone from Sonic Youth to Kraftwerk to Coil.

He’s not just *trying* to look smart either. Turns out Rebotini spends his spare time writing commissioned compositions for France’s *Groupe de Recherches Musicales* (GRM), an esteemed music research organization founded by *musique concrète* pioneer Pierre Schaeffer. His fully orchestrated pieces include an early crack at mixing “Aphex Twin

and DJ Vadim, with a bit of a Detroit techno influence” and the acclaimed, synapse-singeing “Grindcore.” In case you didn’t grow up cracking skulls at Carcass and Napalm Death gigs, the latter’s a reference to the post-crust punk subgenre that gets by on little but gun-turret drums, shrieked vocals, and speed-freak songs as short as 10 seconds.

“Think of ‘Dead’ by Napalm Death, where the reverb is longer than the actual track... only written in a classical context,” he explains. To emphasize his point, Rebotini—the former frontman of a death-metal outfit called Swamp—grows like Cookie Monster on the brink of starvation, holding a sinister note for 10 seconds as if he were Whitney Houston singing “I Will Always Hate You.”

“Fashion papers always talk about the trendiness of punk, but metal is the real punk to me,” explains Rebotini. “If you go to see Slayer, you can *feel* the music; you can *see* the broken bottles and the white trash. I’m not even a fan of proper UK punk like The Clash. It feels like party music to me.”

Since the title of Black Strobe’s long-awaited debut LP, *Burn Your Own Church*, could be misconstrued as a blunt reference to black metal, I ask Rebotini his thoughts on the genre’s theatrical and sometimes deadly serious reputation; with its sordid history of hate crimes and cold-blooded murders, corpse paint and Medieval Times costuming, Satanism and church burnings. You know, everything but actual music.

“I thought it was ridiculous at first,” says Rebotini, adding that



**“Maybe I’ll
piss on the Bible
next time.”**

he considers convicted murderer/arsonist Varg Vikernes a genius due to his genuinely twisted, classical-inspired work as Burzum. “Eventually, though, I thought, ‘They may look like crazy boys in corpse paint, but the music they do is very different and, well, very good.’”

Um, what was that comment about Black Strobe not being dark again?

THE DENIAL TWIST

“I didn’t expect to be making a black metal record with them,” says *Burn Your Own Church* producer Paul Epworth (The Rapture, Bloc Party, Phones), “but I think the result we got is a step forward for the band and a challenge to their audience. It took a lot of refining to give the record focus, though.”

Mixer Alan Moulder (Nine Inch Nails, Marilyn Manson, The Jesus and Mary Chain) agrees, adding, “I was very surprised about [the black metal direction]. One of the reasons I was excited about doing it was because I thought it was going to be totally electronic.”

The reason for the rock guitars and Rebotini’s seemingly sudden frontman status was much more drastic than an aesthetic decision. It had to do with the somewhat amicable departure of Ivan Smaghe, Rebotini’s longtime production/remix partner, and a close friend since the pair’s days shilling 12-inches at Paris’

Rough Trade record shop. Considering it’s taken 10 years for Black Strobe to transition from their debut single (“Paris Acid City/Funk Is Not Always What You Think” on Source Records) and a stellar string of Output sides (“Innerstrings,” “Me and Madonna”) to a cohesive album, Smaghe’s punch-out time seems rather strange... or perhaps the byproduct of excessive bickering.

The way Rebotini explains it is much simpler: “I am too much and he is too less.” In other words, Smaghe knows when to stop and stay focused in the songwriting process, while Rebotini begins at the edge of a creative cliff and immediately piles on sawtooth synths, bombastic basslines, and Jack the Ripper riffs until we’re all freefalling.

“The problem wasn’t with Ivan so much as confusion between his DJ sets and the music we make,” explains Rebotini, as I press him further. “I was really tired of seeing fake live electronic performances, so I decided to do a real album with some classical [influences], a slow song, stuff with different tempos—like a Neil Young album, only with a Black Strobe feel.”

BURNING UP

The album approach succeeds, but it’s quite jarring initially. Especially if you’re expecting 11 variations of “Chemical Sweet Girl,” a classic Black Strobe cut that mixes filthy EBM with the

more menacing side of Depeche Mode. Depending on whom you ask, that very rug-pulling transition may have been one of the reasons Smaghe left Black Strobe; that, and Rebotini’s insistence on molding the mysterious duo into a pelvis-thrusting touring band.

“I am not sure it was a ‘rock/dance’ division,” says Smaghe. “It was more of a ‘ambitious/simple’ one. I also *hate* being onstage.”

While the final *Burn Your Own Church* recordings were cut with a four-piece band, Smaghe wrote Rebotini’s lyrics, helped produce everything but the robotic b-side ballad “Come Closer,” and co-wrote every song but “Buzz Buzz,” “Blood Shot Eyes,” and the banging metal/techno instrumental “Brenn Di Ega Kjerke.” Because of this, he finds it hard to listen. “[My] leaving made this album ‘not mine,’ so let’s just say I do not have a strong emotional link to this record anymore,” says Smaghe. “It is a bit sad, but I am being honest. Not that there weren’t good moments but I am the least nostalgic person you’ll ever meet. The best is yet to come; at least I’m trying to convince myself of that.”

As for the man with the slick smile and massive black-metal collection, he’s looking forward to Black Strobe’s first music video, a clip for the Bo Diddly cover “I’m a Man.”

“It’s going to be me walking down the street, slicking my hair back—all that manly, ‘The Boys Are Back in Town’-type stuff,” he says, before doing a 180 back to the darkside. “It’s harder to shock people in France, you know? You can burn the Bible and people say, ‘Go ahead, you cunt! It’s your money.’ Maybe I’ll piss on the Bible next time I’m in the U.S.”

Black Strobe’s *Burn Your Own Church* (Playlouder) is out now.

www.blackstrobe.net, www.myspace.com/blackstrobe

Shot on location at Hospital Productions (www.hospitalproductions.com)

and 151 Rivington, New York, NY. Special thanks to Joey and Derek at 151 Rivington.



Sounds of Summer

Black Strobe’s Arnaud Rebotini is a little bit country, and a little bit rock ‘n’ roll.

1. The Horrors “Gloves”

A new, fresh band with an old-music feel. This reminds me of The Fuzztones and Birthday Party.

2. Dolly Parton “Traveling Man”

Love this groovy country music, especially if we tour the U.S. in July.

3. Slam “Azure”

The perfect summer techno track with beautiful, Detroit-derived harmonies.

4. Mayhem “Anti”

The lords of chaos are back in full force. The black-metal blizzard from Norway is refreshing in the summer.

5. Neil Young “Don’t Let It Bring You Down” (From *Live at Massey Hall 1971*)

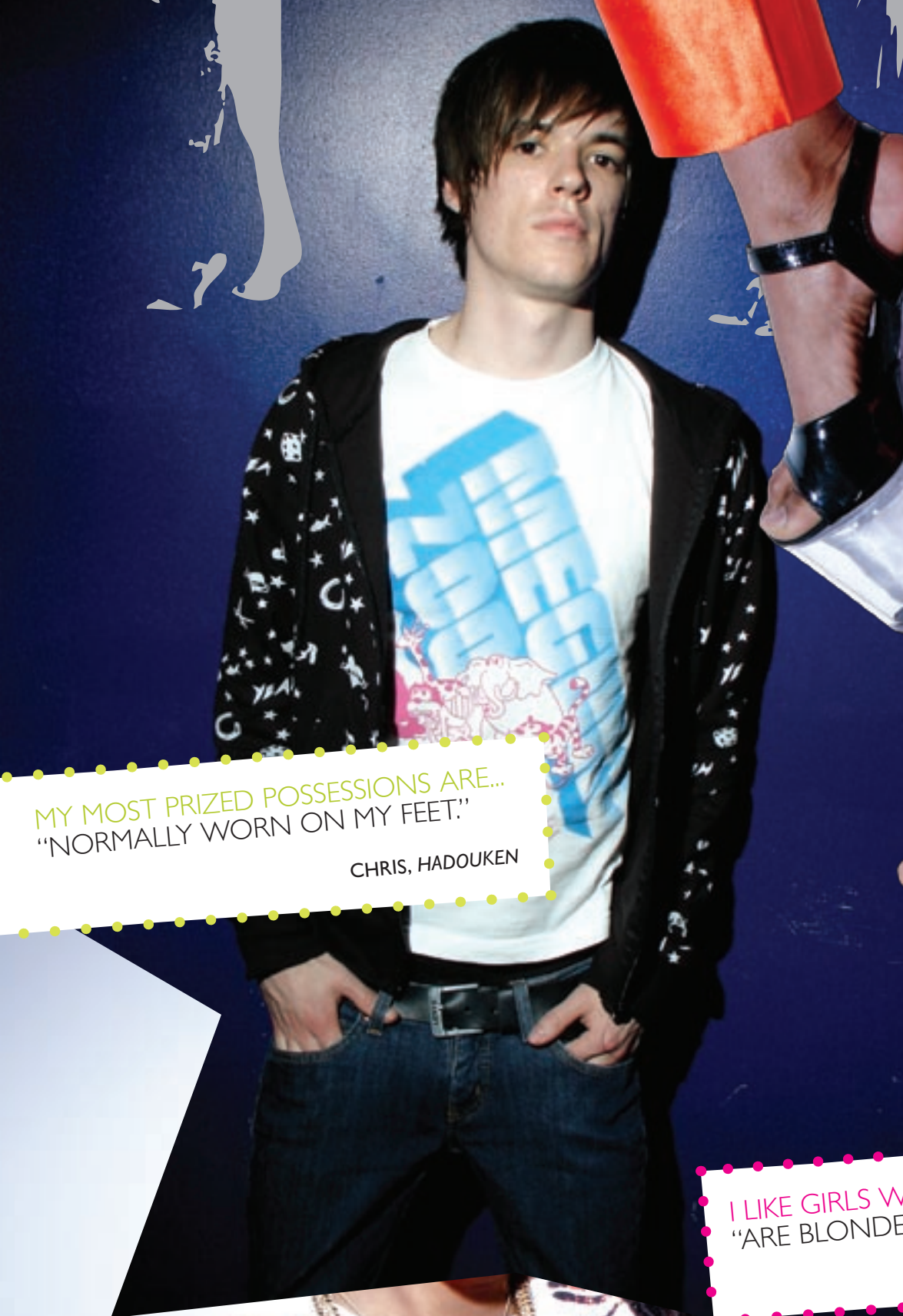
This song is just a pure wonder. Use it by the fire this summer.

IT AIN'T

TOO LOUD



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MY MOST PRIZED POSSESSIONS ARE...
"NORMALLY WORN ON MY FEET."
CHRIS, HADOUKEN



MY SISTERS AND I...
"GET ON LIKE A HOUSE FIRE."
ZAZA, THE REAL HEAT



I LIKE GIRLS WHO...
"ARE BLONDE AND PLAY SYNTHS."
JAMES, HADOUKEN





MY FAVORITE SONG RIGHT NOW IS...
"LO-FI FNK 'CHANGE CHANNEL.'"
SUKI, THE REAL HEAT



MY FAVORITE VIDEOGAME IS...
"DUCK HUNT!"
NICK, HADOUKEN



I LIKE GIRLS WHO...
"PUT \$900 ON THE FIFTH HORSE
IN THE SIXTH RACE."
PILAU, HADOUKEN





I LIKE BOYS WHO...
"ARE NOT AFRAID OF EXPRESSING
THEIR MANLY SELVES."
SHAKI, THE REAL HEAT



MY MOST PRIZED POSSESSION IS...
"MY MINI-GAMEBOY ADVANCE PENDANT!"
ALICE, HADOUKEN

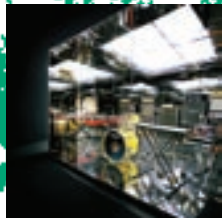




Sa-Ra Creative Partners

SA-RA CREATIVE PARTNERS THE HOLLYWOOD RECORDINGS

Babygrande/US/CD
Sa-Ra is officially off dick-tease status. The trio has been promising a proper full-length since they hit the ground running with 2004's off-kilter funk sensation, "Glorious." Well, ladies and gentlemen, here 'tis. As we patiently await their G.O.O.D. Music debut, this 19-track romp, chock full of synth-laden debauchery and extraterrestrial musings, fills the void with a little help from friends like Erykah Badu, Bilal, Pharoahe Monche, and J. Dilla. SRCP tosses in a few previously released singles and some cyber-funk jawns from the archives of their mother-ship for an eventful affair. Cuts like the Rhodes-heavy twilight jam "So Special" and the head-nodding "Feel The Bass" (featuring Talib Kweli) truly take the lead. And while the album has small bouts of inconsistency, it further cements SRCP's status as genre-bending Hollyweird squares on the verge of reinventing funk, from Sunset Blvd to the stratosphere. *Rico "Superbizze" Washington*



ANTIGUO AUTÓMATA MEXICANO KRAUT SLUT

Static Discos/MEX/CD
Like a terrarium of aluminum arthropods, this sophomore full-length from producer Antiguo Automata Mexicano teems with deliberate activity, the sound of stereoscopic detail being adhered to emotional architecture. AAM (a.k.a. Angel Sánchez Borges) hails from a similar scene as Murcof; but whereas Murcof explores the dramatic pause of the classical minimalist form, AAM establishes and embellishes a murky respiration resonating even at its most shallow. Static-spooked percolation and sonorous decay blankets pervade these seven original metallic melodies and three revisions. If the reverberating flicker of plucked Slinkys strikes a nostalgic chord, this is for you. *Tony Ware*

ROBERT BABICZ A CHEERFUL TEMPER

Systematic/GER/CD
Rogaine-promoting cover art aside, Robert Babicz's newest full-length will easily satisfy those who know Babicz better via his Force Inc.- and DJ moniker, Rob Acid. *A Cheerful Temper's* deep, hypnotic minimalism smacks of Cologne's distinctive techno sound, with dubby tracks like "Imperial Star" reminding us why

this imminently danceable style had such an impact in techno music. Standouts include the swooping, pummeling bass on "Sin" and the clicky-textured "Losing Memories," which faintly recalls Babicz's work as Aton Inc. The exceptional "Crystal Castle" shows this veteran producer's love of old-school Detroit, retrofitting his groove with funk-steeped analog rhythms from a warehouse dancefloor long, long ago. *Janet Tzou*

BATTLES MIRRORED

Warp/UK/CD
With a collective history in bands like Don Caballero, Helmet, and Lynx, the members of Battles have ample experience navigating the angular, often repetitive cadences that identify quality, nearly unclassifiable rock music. On *Mirrored*, their first full-length LP for Warp, the quartet manages to further frustrate the categorically obsessed, crafting an otherworldly amalgam of strident math rock and digital experimentalism. The epic "Tonto"—perhaps the album's most immaculate moment—shows the foursome in perfect lockstep, anchored by John Stanier's precision drumming and Ian Williams' melodic guitar loops. It, like the remainder of *Mirrored*, represents accessible-yet-challenging music in its most admirable form—smart, interesting, always unexpected, and occasionally divisive. *Steve Marchese*

BLACK MOTH SUPER RAINBOW DANDELION GUM

Grave Face/US/CD
Black Moth Super Rainbow makes records like a broken mirror: Each shard's reflection is both a piece of the greater whole, and a complete image within itself. So while *Dandelion Gum* indulges in each of BMSR's elemental parts—the twisted fuzz-pop of "Melt Me," the pan-pipe electro-hippie blur of "When the Sun Grows on Your Tongue," the freak-folk asymmetry of "Spinning Cotton Candy in a Shack Made of Shingles"—it is also merely a piece in a long-range plan. For the most part, this involves beautifully channeling the kind of monolithic low fidelity beloved by bedroom psy-kick enthusiasts everywhere: like Syd and Sebadoh, or The Incredible String Band as performed by Ween in a room full of rubber cement. *Justin Hopper*

BLACK PANTHER MY ETERNAL WINTER

Manekineko/US/CD
With *My Eternal Winter*, former underground mixtape master Black Panther provides the rare producer's album that actually features a thematic focal point. And true to its title, this effort is a dark one. Whether working with songstress Maya Azucena or rhymers MF Grimm, Black Panther inspires his guests to face their inner demons head-on. Amid the apt presence of a lot of overcast boom-bap, this producer proves to have a respectable sonic range—especially when he throws a curve ball on the melancholy downtempo title track featuring sultry-toned vocalist Meredith Dimenna. Yet even in all its darkness, this disc is no downer. *Max Herman*

COPY GUITAR HAIR

Audio Dregs/US/CD
The lightweight follow-up to *Mobius Beard*—from Portland's 8-bit laptop synth-pop wizard Marius Libman—doesn't stink of carbon, but it's every bit as endearingly dorky and energetic as its predecessor, filled with binary handclaps, bubble-gum synths, and boss-level theatrics. The album-opening "Fist" is next-generation Capcom genius, while "Zipper Problems" suggests the pop-hop influence Libman so readily divulges to the press (Dre? really?). Of course, Copy's no Timbaland, but here Libman sure knows when to go for the cheat codes, and when to press reset. *Guitar Hair* is a brisk 10 tracks, over before it begins, and all the better for its respect for our Wii-addled attention spans. *Robbie Mackey*

CULTURE TWO SEVENS CLASH (30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION)

Shanachie/US/CD
According to legend, Culture's lead vocalist Joseph Hill had a vision, while riding a Kingston city bus, that some of Marcus Garvey's cataclysmic prophecies would come true on the seventh day of the seventh month of 1977. It doesn't matter that the day came and went without incident; the resulting record, "Two Sevens Clash," lives on as one of the greatest reggae songs ever recorded. But it's only one jewel among many on this beautiful re-release; the disco stepper "I'm Not Ashamed" and the righteous "See Them a Come" are here, too, along with five bonus tracks, including dubs and DJ versions with the great I-Roy. A fitting tribute to Hill, who passed away unexpectedly last year. *Ross Hogg*

DIMLITE THIS IS EMBRACING

Sonar Kollektiv/GER/CD
Switzerland's Dimitri Grimm is part of a generation of post-hip-hop producers opting to paint their scattered brainwaves on a digital canvas rather than cloth. As Dimlite, Grimm explores territory familiar to fans of J Dilla, Caural or emerging talents Flying Lotus and Hudson Mohawke: bruised MPC beats sinking into quicksand synths, video-game bleeps, and other choppy rhythmic patterns. These gloriously seductive sounds mostly work on *This Is Embracing*, Grimm's second full-length. The good: Collabos with L.A. chanteuse Gabby Hernandez and the evocative "The Way Blood Travels." The bad: Too many stops, starts, and interludes, which hinder the musical momentum. But if you embrace aural ADHD, this album's a heady drug. *Tomas Palermo*

DJ JAZZY JEFF THE RETURN OF THE MAGNIFICENT

BBE-Rapster/US/CD
Known for the transformer scratch as well as his work with Will "Fresh Prince" Smith, DJ Jazzy Jeff's Hall of Famer credentials were sewn up 15 years ago. On the follow-up to his now-classic solo album *The Magnificent*, Jazzy again eschews an overly commercial aesthetic, hooks up some fresh-ta-deth tracks, and adds to his already legendary stature. Whether working with well-known artists (Posdnuos, Method Man, Jean Grae, CL Smooth, Big Daddy Kane, Raheem DeV Vaughn) or relative newcomers (Twone Gabz, ChinahBlac, Peedi Peedi, Rhymefest), Jazzy keeps the quality factor high, infusing each track with just the right amount of musical sensibility. More flavorful than a cheesesteak with extra peppers, this one lives up to its title. *Eric K. Arnold*

DJ KENTARO ENTER

Ninja Tune/UK/CD
This Japanese vinyl maestro made his name with a Solid Steel mix, but the proof is in his original productions. DJ Kentaro is a talented enough chef, and he attracts ingredients that still pop, like The Pharcyde and Fat Jon. But skill sets are made on instrumentals, and Kentaro has a mixed bag of them here. "Handmade Gift" hums along nicely on top of a wah-pedal reggae wave, while the frenetic drum & bass of "Trust" is a tasty jam. But as fast as Kentaro is, he could use some space. His production can clog up quickly, leaving listeners not on dancefloors (or on acid) somewhat exhausted. An accomplished debut, but I'm looking forward to the follow-up. *Scott Thill*

DJ VADIM THE SOUND CATCHER

BBE/UK/CD
Russian-born globe-trekker DJ Vadim has made a habit out of collecting countless nations' sounds and adding them to his global brew. On *The Sound Catcher*, Vadim catches plenty, though Caribbean riddims are the primary port of entry. Dub tracks and reggae-tinged soul ("Black Is the Night") can all be found in Vadim's repertoire of good vibes. But hip-hop isn't left in the dust. The Bongo-laced "Got to Rock" (with MC Zion) nicely resurrects that '83 Kurtis Blow flavor, while "Ballistic Affairs" (featuring Skinnyman) puts a modern British spin on BDP's "Stop the Violence." Instead of pretending to be a pioneer of some ridiculous new sub-genre, Vadim succeeds simply by putting his stamp on the music he loves. *Max Herman*

DOMMM YOLOXOCHITL

Young Cubs/US/CD
It's debatable whether Bright Eyes will still be the "new Dylan" 30 years from now. But in the here and now Conor Oberst's doe-eyed-gone-wild-eyed affectations certainly have at least one fan in Los Angeles' Dommm (a.k.a. Dominic Tiberio). Somewhere between the confessions of Oberst (or perhaps Xiu Xiu) and the confrontations of Venetian Snares lie Dommm's hectoring siren spasms and crimped synths, and these calm, melodic vignettes struggle with issues of ugly-beautiful vulnerability (especially "Candy Apple Head" and "Holy Hyena"). Dommm places emphasis on having a center of gravity within the diffusion, à la Fennesz (see guitar-flecked "Sloth" and "Conked"). Past all the Cex-ual tension, IDeMo is emerging. *Tony Ware*

EFDEMIN EFDEMIN

Dial/GER/CD
Berlin-based musician and Panoramabar resident Phillip Sollmann (a.k.a. Efdemin) finally releases his eponymous debut album, giving Dial—a label that thrills more than it thuds—one the best records of the year. An understated elegance and

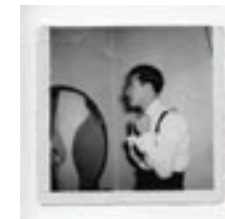
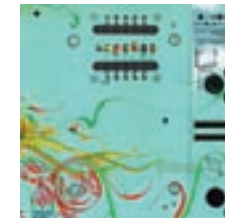
focus on sound production over dance induction is true to the label's sound, and it's prevalent here. "Lohn & Brot" has quickly become an underground and internet sensation with its organ-like melody and quietly over-driven bassline that pulls the listener through a series of soft highlights. "Bergwein" is the track that stands out, with its cautious, atmospheric, acid tones peppering sampled instrumentation. If you value your headphones, you need this disc. *Cameron Octigan*

EFTERKLANG UNDER GIANT TREES

Leaf/UK/CD
Danish 10-piece Efterklang continues to tread nature-inspired post-classical territory on their third outing for Leaf, the aptly titled *Under Giant Trees*. Flitting from major to minor keys, as if in constant dialogue with itself, the album finds tracks like the splendorous "Falling Horses" and the almost playfully melancholy "Towards the Bare Hills" chafing against the ambivalent moodiness of "Himmelbjerget." Each composition is as majestic as the last, whether relying on the sweeping elegance of Rachel's, the child-like coyness and wide-eyed tenacity of Múm, or the sort of broad classical strokes that wouldn't sound out of place on a Godspeed record. A mighty, thoughtful offering of Morr-inspired chamber pop for the post-apocalyptic set. *Robbie Mackey*

DOMINIK EULBERG HEIMISCHE GEFILDE

Traum/GER/CD
"Greeting, and colorful woodpecker." That's the gist of *Heimische Gefilde's* opening, which revisits the "wildlife techno" that underscored Eulberg's debut, *Flora & Fauna*. This time, the part-time park ranger introduces a new bird or insect between each



LO-FI FNK BOYLIFE

Moshi Moshi/UK/CD
Lo-Fi FNK (pronounced "lo-fi funk") cranks out house-heavy electro-pop that smells like Daft Punk and tastes like New Order. These two Swedish youngsters keep it simple—relying on clean, minimal drum programming and the power of analog synths to consummate their pop passion. Tracks like "Steppin' Out" and "What's on Your Mind" use the same chunky synth lines that made Daft Punk's *Human After All* a club staple and car companion. But, as the title implies, *Boylife* isn't quite as mature as its preceding influences. With lyrics about partying and post-adolescent heartbreak ("Steppin' out/It's hard to do when you're young"), it may be a little tough for electro enthusiasts in their 30s not to chuckle. Regardless of the lyrics, the modulating synths and consistently catchy choruses will have no trouble getting clubs completely riled and ready for youthful indiscretions. *Fred Miketa*



track of glittering minimal techno. From the machine comes music on par with (but sexier than) the best of Lindstrom and The MFA. "Afraid of Seeing Stars?" sets things in motion, followed by bait-and-switch banger "Der Buchdrucker" and eventually a track in which the bass, snare, hi-hat, and vocals are literally for the birds. Remarkably Eulberg remains so connected with the natural world, and in sharing it with listeners, that he reveals some of the most exotic sounds of all. *Rachel Shimp*

**THOMAS FEHLMANN
HONIGPUMPE**

Kompakt/GER/CD
With a rich and extensive history stretching back to the '70s—and including pioneering turns with Palais Schaumburg, 3MB, and The Orb—Thomas Fehlmann has all but become the music. *Honigpumpe*, his second album for Kompakt, is a natural succession—an afterhours techno broadcast of the highest order. The rich, atmospheric dub and throbbing 4/4 cadence of "Soziale Waerme" and "Bienenkoenigin" resonate with subliminal echoes of the label's early days, while tracks like "Dusted With Powder" advance the art of texture and groove to a new level. Finally, "With Oil" finishes with a glistening, ethereal ambience that is unique to its creator. A monumental outing for both label and producer. *Doug Morton*



**FEIST
THE REMINDER**

Cherrytree-Interscope/US/CD
In 2005, after years of collaborating with pals like Peaches and Broken Social Scene, the spotlight finally fell solely on Leslie Feist—her voice and charm so powerful that nobody cared that most of the songs on *Let It Die* were covers. On *The Reminder*, which she recorded with a gaggle of dudes (including Julian



**A-PLUS
MY LAST GOOD DEED**

Hiero Imperium/US/CD
An original member of Souls of Mischief, A-Plus has already earned his place in hip-hop's pantheon, both for his innovative lyrical approach and for the Hieroglyphics crew's pioneering stance. A-Plus has kept busy in recent years as half of production team Compound 7, and all that time in the lab has paid off as he finally delivers the album his fans have been waiting for. Equally comfortable smashing through solo tracks like "Patna Please" or collaborating with friends like Del, Jennifer Johns, Femi, and Sunspot Jonz, A-Plus drops hell knowledge while keeping the party crackin'. Inspired by everything from his Caribbean roots ("The One") to the tragic death of a close friend ("Kiss the Sky") to fluffy green twomp sacks ("My Dub Song"), *My Last Good Deed* upholds Hiero's storied underground hip-hop tradition and reveals him to be one of the last honest MCs. *Eric K. Arnold*

Brown, Mocky, and Jamie Lidell), everything's her own, barring a raucous take on Nina Simone's "Sea Lion Woman." Again, Feist's eclectic tastes make for a giddily schizophrenic album. As she jumps from tender ballads ("So Sorry") to BSS-fevered pop jams to torch songs, she sets herself up for another runaway success. "I feel it all," she sings, and you will too. *Rachel Shimp*

**FISK INDUSTRIES
EPS AND RARITIES**

Mush/US/2CD
The Mush imprint stacks up a double-disc set from Mat Ranson, cherry-picking the best of this London-based experimentalist's early works on Highpoint Lowlife, including limited edition 10-inches and MP3-only releases. From the joint-popping exotica of "Polska" to the laser-cut bedroom beats of "Reflection," there's a wealth of thoughtfully programmed mood-craft to be had here. Tracks like "Moieties (Part Two)" and "Liquid Silver Moments" suspend lumbering computer grooves in rippling, gelatinous atmospheric, while "On Thursday" and "Variant of Option A" set Ranson's begrimed grit-hop musings apart from the short-circuited beauty of emotive sleepers like "The Way We Found Each Other." Fans of Neo Ouija and the deeper side of Skam are likely to be impressed. *Doug Morton*

**SAGE FRANCIS
HUMAN THE DEATH DANCE**

Epitaph/US/CD
Proper poetry never goes out of style, and Sage Francis is, no doubt, a poet. The Rhode Island MC earned his reputation with a molten mixtape and then went on to win several battles. So with three albums and years of touring proving his hip-hop prowess, what makes this album (his fourth, and second for Epitaph) poetic is his verse—thoughtfully constructed, tangential (yet always to the point), and never reaching for words just to hear himself flow. But most of all, it's his honesty: "I know you much better than you think I do," he raps, but the more he reveals about himself, the more you find that he knows about humankind. *Daniel Sivek*

**GANG GANG DANCE
RETINA RIDDIM**

The Social Registry/US/CD-DVD
These NYC multimedia subversives have just issued their strangest work yet—which is saying several mouthfuls, judging from past Gang Gang Dance efforts. *Retina Riddim* consists of a 24-minute CD and a 33-minute DVD. The former is amorphous psychedelic dub that sounds like Black Dice riotously improvising in Black Ark Studios. You don't exactly know what's happening for the disc's duration, but you realize something of unearthly beauty has pierced your headspace, the frequently morphing rhythms and grotesque textures rendering reality an absurd abstraction. All in a night's work for GGD, as the DVD proves—the first two minutes anyway; my copy has a glitch that makes it rewind at that point. But that glimpse was definitely dazzling. *Dave Segal*

**KEITH HUDSON & THE SOUL SYNDICATE
NUH SKIN UP**

Pressure Sounds/UK/CD
The reggae world lost producer, singer, and bandleader Keith Hudson in 1984, and its taken the last 20 years to grasp his accomplishments. *Nuh Skin Up* provides revelations about this journeyman, who recorded in Kingston and New York, offering 11 mostly dub tracks from the late '70s. Hudson had hits and his share of misses—*Skin* contains brilliant moments and a few duds. "Dreadful Words Dub" and "Bad Things Dub" encapsulate Hudson's penchant for brooding melodies, thunderclap effects, and splashing drum echoes. These songs, along with the title track and "Words Dub," sound as good as vintage King Tubby, but the addition of several mediocre tunes, recorded with "a white reggae band from Baltimore" (according to the liner notes) sully this fantastic flashback. *Tomas Palermo*

**ARNOLD JARVIS
LOVE & LIFE**

Music For Life/US/2CD
While your parents were enduring the last years of changing your diapers, Arnold Jarvis began laying down the foundation for what would be a lengthy vocal- and songwriting project spanning two decades. *Love & Life* is a compendium of house numbers he's lent his soul-laden chops to, with production from the likes of Louie Vega, Roy Davis Jr., and Alix Alvarez. While never straying from Jarvis' soulful house vibe, each disc has been crafted by other DJs' hands and minds. While Florida-based DJ/producer Albert Cabrera "blends" the first disc, Ricanstruction label founder Frankie Feliciano mixes up the goods on the second. Good vocals and choice production sometimes grow more ripe with age. *Velanche*

**JIMI TENOR & KABU KABU
JOYSTONE**

Ubiquity/US/CD
Finnish keyboardist Jimi Tenor continues to drift further away from his Sähkö Recordings roots with *Joystone*, his surprising debut for Ubiquity. On *Joystone*, Tenor and Kabu Kabu (a West African trio led by Fela Kuti acolyte Nicholas Addo Nettey) find a loved-up medium between Scandinavian and African sonic sensibilities. Over these 12 tracks, buoyant, undulating Afrobeat rhythms converge with Tenor's suave lounge-tonica, and then get embellished with some CTI-like fusionoid brass and woodwinds from skilled Finnish and English jazz players. Tenor & Kabu Kabu's unlikely conflation of tropical and cool aesthetics results in a distinctive party-centric disc that could be equally effective at a United Nations soirée or a swinging bachelor-pad seduction scene. *Dave Segal*

**JOE BEATS
DIVERSE RECOURSE**

Bully/CAN/CD
Although there's little in the way of indie-rock remix records to compare it to, former Non-Prophecs producer Joe Beats' *Indie Rock Blues* remains the benchmark of the niche. *Diverse Recourse*, his first solo outing since that impressive release, continues his trademarked "unpaused" production technique, exploiting a raw, gritty instrumentalism that few producers can touch. Moody, and distinguished by warm, psychedellic loops, *Diverse Recourse* decisively establishes the Joe Beats "sound"—one that's been missing from hip-hop since its recent, often questionable turn toward faster BPMs. Again, Joe Beats shows his ability to breathe new life into a tired sound—a fitting soundtrack to spring's return. *Steve Marchese*

**KRYPTIC MINDS & LEON SWITCH
LOST ALL FAITH**

Defcom/UK/CD
There's a heap of pre-emptive praise for this first album from Defcom owners Simon Shreeve (Kryptic) and Brett Bigden (Switch), and it's not unwarranted. Producing together since 1999, their sound—placed smartly between Kode 9's dubstep and Klute's rushing drum & bass on any Mary Anne Hobbs playlist—makes perfect, though occasionally predictable, sense in 2007. Hurl a stake, or the sawed-off end of a Flying V, through their zombieified "Steel Heart," destined for a fast-and-furious videogame. The rest is vibrantly alive and fresh, especially the ganja-flavored "Minor Nine." The lone lyric-based song annihilates Shreeve's and Bigden's hell-bound posturing with the line "Looking through your eyes/I see the universe looking back at me." See, there's hope yet. *Rachel Shimp*

**MANSBESTFRIEND
POLY.SCI.187**

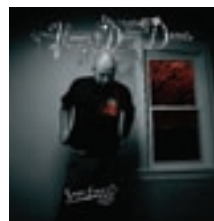
Anticon/US/CD
For *Poly.Sci.187* Anticon co-founder Sole reemerges with his off-and-on moniker, Mansbestfriend, delivering an instrumental album that combines dialogue samples, droning synths, and mechanical drums. But void of his witty writing and rapid-fire vocals, the 16-tracker lacks character and cohesiveness, making it a hodgepodge of mediocre beats. Songs like "Bosnian Jazz" and "The Teachings of Leviticus" are repetitive and awkwardly sequenced at times. "50 at 30" is one of a few tracks that displays smooth sound layering, but its reliance on the main samples grows tiresome. Besides "Writing Onward," which builds with strong drums and melodic textures, other tracks are mostly forgettable. Sole is surely a creative artist, but *Poly.Sci.187* is an unremarkable footnote in his otherwise strong discography. *David Ma*

**MICROFILM
AFTER DARK + BLUEPRINTS**

Fiche/CAN/2CD
"Two men in love with German minimal techno, disco trash, early '80s synthpop" is how the official Microfilm bio reads, and it pretty much predicts where *After Dark* is going. Meticulously regurgitated Spoonerisms and Speicher-esque tidbits, while cleanly executed, deliver little more than a safely enclosed tram ride through the same old theme park. Fortunately, the *Blueprints* portion of this double album successfully fucks shit up with some eclectic remix bombings. Kero rewires "Sex Education" with his disjointed IDM flow alongside a couple of mild tech-house remixes from Warmdesk and Souttek. Outsourced by Area injects their dry, shuffling snazz into "Cassingle" while Monologic transforms the yarblic-deficient "Versus" into a seething, bottom-heavy 4/4 stomper. *Doug Morton*

**MIKKEL METAL
BRONE AND WAIT**

Echocord/DEN/CD
Prolific producer Mikkel Meldgaard (nicknamed "Metal" for his love of hard drum & bass) releases an album per year on either Kompakt or his Copenhagen hometown's Echocord, a place for his more abstract, less melodic music. Those who've come to know Meldgaard via the former label may be surprised that his latest album is even more chilled; it nearly lacks a pulse. *Brone and Wait* meanders like someone living in the thick fog of a perpetual hangover. Present and past influences (dub and shoegaze, respectively) are layered throughout each composition, dancing around each other but never touching in obvious ways. Those masterful, shape-shifting atmospheres hold interest on an album that's otherwise slightly too murky and same-y. *Rachel Shimp*



**MILENASONG
SEVEN SISTERS**

Monika/GER/CD
Folksinger Sabrina Milena, a post-art school wanderer, at least knows she wants to make music. And hers—debuting on Berlin's label-home for experimental music made by women—is very unusual. Mixed with Tarwater's Bernd Jesträm and mystical folkie-turned-busker Jeff Tarlton, Milena spins enchanted yarns from Norwegian folklore and her own experiences. Many songs reverberate with an Animal Collective consciousness. From the opener (like Cat Power evolving into Siouxsie Sioux) to "Casey on Fire" (mournful gothic vocals over motorik rhythms), Milena puts her eccentricities front-and-center. Not sticking to one groove is her strength, making *Seven Sisters* a challenging, gratifying journey. *Rachel Shimp*



**BALKAN BEAT BOX
NU MED**

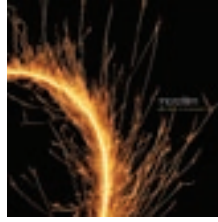
JDub/US/CD
NY-based saxophonist Ori Kaplan and drummer Tamir Muskat have been tooling around the borough underground for years, performing in groundbreaking bands like Gogol Bordello and Big Lazy. But a turn toward Eastern Europe proved to be their breakthrough. With their self-titled debut, the pair took pounding brass sounds, killer guitar work, and some mighty fine beats and made one of the most groundbreaking albums on this scene. This follow-up is equally as compelling on a songwriting level and much cleaner production-wise. The presence of frenetic Israeli MC Tomer Yosef is tasteful and humorous, making the record a close approximation of their stage show. Still, studio work is key, and here Muskat's hand is steady. The Moroccan-based rhythm of "Pachima" is a swirling pastiche of Gnawa with tasteful electronics, while the clean horns of "BBBeat" frolic amidst a flurry of *darbuka* and drums. *Derek Beres*



NADJA TOUCHED

Alien8/CAN/CD

Toronto-based artists Aidan Baker and Leah Buckareff return with an album of destructive dirges. *Touched*, the duo's second full-length as Nadja, is full of experimental doom—the sound conforms closely to a scratchy, noisy aesthetic, though there's a more traditional underlying structure to the tracks compared to most in the genre. The opener, "Mutagen," begins with multiple layers of feedback and loops that dissolve into a blissed-out ball of fuzz. "Incubation/Metamorphosis" is a 20-minute-long oscillating journey through all of the highs and lows the group has to offer, narrated by distant vocals. If you can cut through the thicket, you'll find a symphony of destruction here. *Cameron Octigan*



PARTS & LABOR MAPMAKER

JagJaguwar/US/CD

Sounding enormous isn't necessarily about *being* enormous. Proof: Exactly three dudes comprise Brooklyn's Parts & Labor, but the 12 songs on their latest release—the fiery, frantic *Mapmaker*—manage to sound utterly massive. Thank the synergy—drummer Chris Weingarten's schizoid kit work is matched fit-for-fit by singer Dan Friel's bulging-neck-vein delivery, and his burring, whirring guitar. Together, there's an almost frightening amount of verve and dynamism. About three minutes into the aptly titled punk pummel "Fractured Skulls," Weingarten's hi-hats and snares gnash their teeth underneath a rousing synth-horn fanfare. The rest of the album falls in line behind these theatrics, each track exploding like a magnificent noise-pop firework display. It doesn't get much bigger than that. *Robbie Mackey*



PEDER AND HE JUST POINTED TO THE SKY...

Ubiquity/US/CD

Taking cues from an interview he read with producer Rick Rubin, Danish remixer and DJ Peder embarked on an inward quest. Having refashioned the sounds of The Beastie Boys and DJ Krush, Peder was determined to tap into the cinematic soundscape inside his non-mainstream soul. With *And He Just...* he's created a dark and brooding beast full of horror-movie pianos and stabbing percussive thrusts. It's not an easy, or particularly interesting, listen, but within this quest he managed to create one of the greatest singles of the past decade. "The Sour," featuring ex-Screaming Headless Torsos vocalist Dean Bowman, is a jazz-gospel gem proving that a part can equal, and indeed surpass, the sum of the whole. *Derek Beres*

PHONIQUE GOOD IDEA

Dessous/GER/CD

Berlin-based Phonique (a.k.a. Michael Vater) usually works with fellow producer Alex Kruger, but he brings in plenty of collaborators on his second album. Even with the added talent, this two-disc album never quite crosses the line from well done into excellent. The first disc features polished, pared-back house and electro, with detached vocals and subtle synth washes. The bonus disc isn't all that bonus: It lays down a steady groove but never goes anywhere interesting until the end... Too late. There's nothing here that's bad, and it's easy to imagine many of these tracks on the dancefloor. But there's a spark missing that ultimately gives the album a take-it-or-leave-it feel. *Luciana Lopez*

PISSED JEANS HOPE FOR MEN

Sub Pop/US/CD

Expanding on the unhealthy din of 2006's *Shallow*, Pennsylvania's Pissed Jeans continue their legacy with *Hope for Men*, their first full-length on Sub Pop. Combining claustrophobic vocals with dirty, repetitive riffs, the band occupies a space between noise and hardcore previously inhabited by the Jesus Lizard and Flipper. One new aspect is the addition of piano, which adds an element of creepiness to Matt Korvette's raspy, guttural vocals. Elsewhere, shrill distortion makes way for fist-pumping mayhem on "People Person," while droning guitars vomit arena-ready rock anthems ("A Bad Wind," for one). Filled with heavy-as-molasses jams, *Hope for Men* will blow your mind if you can stomach it. *Josiah Hughes*

PATRICK PULSINGER DOGMATIC SEQUENCES: THE SERIES 1994-2006

Disko B/GER/CD

Patrick Pulsinger's name is synonymous with the punishing four-to-the-floor techno of the '90s, when his *Dogmatic Sequences* vinyl series was a natural choice for mixing in a dark mood or three. *Dogmatic Sequences: The Series 1994-2006* is vintage Pulsinger, where angular techno moves like shifting Teutonic plates against synth noise and off-kilter tones. Classics like "Babylon 17, 15" plunge into hard, murky acid, while minimal pieces like "Viagem" show why Pulsinger was a such perfect companion to the stripped-down aesthetic of Basic Channel. Some tracks digress into cinematic acid jazz ("City Lights"), but *The Series* demonstrates that Pulsinger's pieces were created to be building blocks for any techno DJ's toolbox. *Janet Tzou*

RAS MYHRDAK PRINCE OF FIRE VOLUME 1

Minor 7 Flat 5/GER/CD

Over the last few years, Andreas "Brotherman" Christopherson's Minor 7 Flat 5 label has been home to some of the most noteworthy European releases by contemporary Jamaican vocalists. A big part of the picture is Brotherman's penchant for the melodic complexity that dancehall often lacks. Recorded in Jamaica with ace players such as Horsemouth Wallace, Bongo Herman, and Obeah, this disc showcases the talents of otherwise unknown singjay Ras Myhrdak, who is quite striking as a singer and occasionally anonymous in deejay mode. Nevertheless, Myhrdak keeps it conscious throughout, and his vocal flair makes this a promising debut. *David Katz*

SAVATH & SAVALAS GOLDEN POLLEN

Anti-/US/CD

Scott Herren kicks back, droops his eyes, and never bothers to get up for 52 minutes on *Golden Pollen*. That can seem odd for a fella known for cramming leftfield idea after idea into a glutted MPC sampler. The latest joint from his Savath & Savalas project goes further into psychedelic Barcelona soul and delivers many



Throbbing Gristle

THROBBING GRISTLE PART TWO: THE ENDLESS NOT

Mute/US/CD

It's been nearly 30 years since Throbbing Gristle released an album of new material—and, damn, has it been worth the wait. Genesis, Sleazy, Chris, and Cosey reignite the post-industrial flame with *Part Two: The Endless Not*. While *Part Two* relies far less on the harsh analog clipping of TG's *The Third and Final Report* or the synth-driven, dark new age of *20 Jazz Funk Greats*, it's no less disturbing. They whip up annihilating noise, melodic piano scores, and provocative lyrics. Tracks like "Almost a Kiss" play like an over-produced Coil ballad (complete with gentle xylophone melodies, a dissonant, subsonic bassline, and Sleazy's desperate howling, screeching, and whimpering), while "The Worm Waits Its Turn" transforms IDM textures and percussion into a fucked-up nu-jazz cacophony. Evidently *Part Two* is the final incarnation of TG—so pray that the Jay-Zs of experimental music make a quick return. *Fred Miketa*



MATTHEW DEAR ASA BREED

"★★★★★ A work of electronic focused song craft that leaves everything else in the dust... A near perfect album." -URB

"The year's most unexpected pop masterpiece, Asa Breed might make you rethink everything you thought you knew about guitars, drum machines, and pop itself. It's not just a surprising new direction for Matthew Dear; it marks his arrival as a major songwriting talent." -Philip Sherburne (Pitchfork, The Wire, XLR8R)

MATTHEWDEAR.COM | GHOSTLY.COM



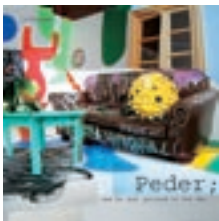


fine, pillow-side guitar ballads and sunset-hazed textures—namely on “Paisaje” and “Olhas.” The best S&S tracks always sounded like wet putty in Herren’s impatient hands on the mixing board. Here, he takes an unplugged route that often grows listless, despite much beauty. Just don’t mix this record with cheap wine and Valentine’s Day loneliness. *Cameron Macdonald*

ULRICH SCHNAUSS
GOODBYE

Domino/US/CD

Goodbye’s sweetly melancholy vocal melodies, lush layers of electronics, and effects-heavy guitar recall Cocteau Twins and the UK’s dream pop and shoegaze movements of the ’80s and ’90s. Indeed, the German’s equally hazy previous albums landed him remixes for former members of genre bands Slowdive and Ride, not to mention Depeche Mode. On his third record, tracks like “Stars” and “Here Today, Gone Tomorrow” immerse the listener even deeper in a shimmering psychedelia that sometimes washes into Enya territory, most notably on “A Song About Hope.” Schnauss notes that *Goodbye* caps a chapter in his sound—good news, as it’s hard to see him moving forward without a change in direction. *Eric Smillie*



SEEFEEL
QUIQUE

Too Pure/UK/CD

Upon *Quique*’s original release in 1993, Seefeel was widely perceived as an imagined collaboration between their then-recent predecessors The Orb and My Bloody Valentine, seemingly drawing on the space of the former and the bliss of the latter. Though generating sounds from an ostensibly orthodox palette of guitar, bass, drums, and voice, the quartet’s rapturous music nevertheless appeared



dislocated from the strictures of the “rock song.” Preceding Seefeel releases on Warp and Rephlex, *Quique* sounded so immersive that the listening experience was frequently related to the womb, to suspension in amniotic fluids. Re-issued 14 years on (with a bonus disc of rare remixes and archive tracks), *Quique* retains this sense of wonderment, naïveté, and bliss. *David Hemingway*

SHAPES AND SIZES
SPLIT LIPS, WINNING HIPS, A SHINER

Asthmatic Kitty/US/CD

All eyes were on Victoria, BC’s Shapes and Sizes when they signed to Sufjan Stevens’ Asthmatic Kitty imprint, but their self-titled debut was lukewarm at best. Following a move to Montreal, however, *Split Lips, Winning Hips, A Shiner* is a marked improvement. Continuing their anything-goes approach to indie pop, the songs on *Split Lips* swell with surprises at every turn. Opener “Alone/Alive” builds up to a joyous chorus, while other tracks allow for sweeps of noise and group sing-alongs (“HighLife”). Finding the balance between noisy experimentation and catchy pop is never easy, but *Split Lips* plays out like a collaboration between Pavement and Captain Beefheart, leaving no question that Shapes and Sizes have hit their stride. *Josiah Hughes*

SALLY SHAPIRO
DISCO ROMANCE

Diskokaine/AUS/CD

Swedish dance chanteuse Sally Shapiro, who sounds even more childlike and earnest than hipster-approved Euro diva Annie, one-ups the competition with sappy Italo-disco love songs more plastic and delicious than a crate of Twinkies. While Shapiro’s shy, adolescent coo and wounded heart are key—she supposedly demands solitude in the studio when laying down vocals—producer Johan Agebjörn’s indulgent tracks make the record. His songs are a hazy, neon-colored synth-pop dream, keytar solos mixed with the cheesiest of escapist, electro-fueled ’80s film soundtracks. Shapiro doesn’t showcase much range or dimension, but it’s unnecessary when floating atop beats that are the guiltiest of guilty pleasures. *Patrick Sisson*

AMIR SULAIMAN
LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

Uprising/US/CD

Def Poetry Jam performer Amir Sulaiman is the latest activist/spoken-word artist to kick his unabashed poetics via hip-hop. On his new album, Sulaiman confronts the harshest realities of life with oft-ferociously delivered wordplay. But it’s not just this poet’s intensity that will catch your ears. On the jazz-tinged “Make It Through,” Sulaiman calms his usual growl as he reaches out to women caught in hazardous relationships—not by offering false hope, but by calling it like it is. Because he refuses to beat around the bush, Sulaiman’s confrontational poetry-hop has scant mass appeal. But anyone who’s willing to put his or her thinking cap on would be wise to cop this. *Max Herman*

TERMINAL 11
FRACTURED SUNSHINE

Hymen/GER/CD

It’s sometimes hard to distinguish one artist from the next in the Ant Zen/Hymen stable. Not so Terminal 11. *Fractured Sunshine* takes the Arizonan’s obsession with meticulous detail to a miraculous extreme, creating a sort of OCD breakcore album—it’s composed completely out of very clean sounds but still manages to convey wild-eyed mania. His weirdly flat drums constantly fluctuate against strange samples, the whole thing feeling compressed and yet far-reaching at the same time. It’s not hard to see how Terminal 11 has earned undying praise from folks like Jason Forrest, and while the album’s about as far from “groovy” as you can get, you might end up finding it loveable. *Matt Earp*

THE BAMBOOS
RAWVILLE

Tru Thoughts/UK/CD

Australian deep-funk group The Bamboos blew up the scene a few years back with their own contribution to the “Tighten Up” legacy—a breathless, flutes-and-Hammonds workout that sweetened the Kool-Aid for last year’s *Step It Up*. And you’d be forgiven for thinking that album was excellent if you haven’t heard *Rawville*. With funk-family help from the likes of Alice Russell (channeling Spanky Wilson), Ohmega Watts (“Get in the Scene” argues for a Watts-Bamboos full-length), and Quantic, who produces several tracks, The Bamboos show why they’re the golden boys of 21st-century funk. But it’s still their unilateral instrumental romps (“Happy,” “The Witch”) that make The Bamboos tick—their tripped-out funky drums, sharp organ stabs, and wicked-pick-it guitar are practically incomparable. *Justin Hopper*



Jay Tripwire

JAY TRIPWIRE
GEMINI SOUL

Nordic Trax/CAN/CD

If you’re a house fan, you’re plenty familiar with Vancouverite Jay Tripwire already; over his decade-long career as a DJ and producer, he’s landed on a number of high-profile comps. Nevertheless, this is his first album, a predictably house-y effort with strong jazz and psychedelic streaks. The disc sounds like the work of a mature producer who knows his game, and “Body to Body,” which sets a confident tone as it comes early in the disc, is deep, groovy, and sexy. Likewise, “English Bay” includes Herbie Hancock-style keyboards, while “The Evil That Men Do” overlays spacey effects against a clicking, popping beat. A few tracks fall flat, like the smooth jazz-y “Sagittarius,” but overall *Gemini Soul* is solid enough to make it worth the 10-year wait. *Luciana Lopez*



Executive produced by Diplo, Bonde do Role deliver the *Licensed to Ill* for 2007.

“Bonde are a paradox enclosed in contradictions. They play baile funk—a flippant, punked-up take on Miami Bass developed in Rio’s favelas—and yet aren’t from Rio. And they are poised to become the genre’s first international successes.”—*Observer Music Monthly*



The Cinematic Orchestra
Ma Fleur

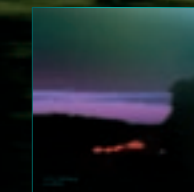
Out now on CD/LP

The first new studio album since the acclaimed *Every Day* featuring guest vocalists **Fontella Bass** (Art Ensemble Of Chicago), **Lou Rhodes** (Lamb) and **Patrick Watson**.

“*Ma Fleur* builds into a grandly melancholic journey through life, love, family and finally death, via chamber jazz intimacy, midnight acoustic buzz and rich orchestral sweep.”—*MOJO* ****

ulrich schnauss
goodbye

cd/lp out july 10
also available:
quicksand memory ep
cd/12" out now

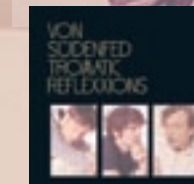


The highly anticipated follow up to 2003’s landmark album *A Strangely Isolated Place*.

“Ulrich Schnauss produces stunningly original and gushingly beautiful music that is comparable to what would happen if My Bloody Valentine, Boards of Canada, M83, and Four Tet put their production heads together.”—Remix

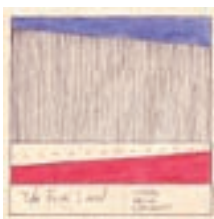
VON SÜDENFED
TROMATIC REFLEXIONS

Von Südenfed is the new project from **Mark E. Smith** (The Fall) and **Jan St Werner & Andi Toma** (Mouse On Mars). *Tromatic Reflexions* “is the kind of exploration of space and motivation that the dance-punk scene is supposed to be about.”—*UNCUT* ****



Out now on CD/LP





**THE FOUR LEVEL
STARS FROM AIRCRAFT**

Breakbeat Science/US/CD

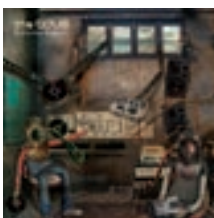
The Four Level is L.A.-based Pieter K, the most brilliant, thoughtful, and unique drum & bass dude America ever produced, and Amy Jacob (who?), a singer from New Jersey band Prosolar Mechanics, whom you might know from Pieter K's track "Stars From Aircraft," a wonderful breakbeat excursion off his 2002 full-length (inexplicably missing here). The Four Level's production is all over the map, from the rock-guitar wash of "Collapse:Expand" to the slow drift of "Inaudible" to the tightly controlled groove of the album's best track, "If I Land." Sadly, through it all, Jacob is mediocre at best. Considering Pieter K is such a promising and wildly creative musician, this album is a bit of a let down. *Matt Earp*



**THE LOCUST
NEW ERECTIONS**

Anti-/US/CD

New Erections is about as close this San Diego flailcore four-piece has ever come to pop music. Of course, "close" is still pretty far away when your back-catalog is a bunch of bleating screeches, squealing guitars, math-spazzing, and blast-beaten percussion hiccups all squeezed into tangled fits shorter than your favorite ringtone. Nevertheless, the change is tough to ignore on *New Erections*, where bassist/vocalist Justin Pearson has turned his blood-curdling shriek into an unruly growl, and The Locust's finally fit some mood swings and extended dynamic shifts into their characteristic 50-second freak-outs. Spazzcore growing up? Hardly. The Locust spreading its wings? For sure. *Robbie Mackey*



**THE OPUS
BLENDING DESTINY**

Self-released/US/CD

After a three-year hiatus, Chicago's premier instrumental hip-hop duo, The Opus, is back with another hypnotic and overcast album. With their boom-bap rhythms and ethereal melodies, the compositions of Mr. Echoes and The Isle of Weight are hard enough to evoke head-nods but calm enough to inspire deep contemplation. And a number of remixes, including their eerie take on Sonic Sum's "Films," don't interrupt the flow of this release a bit. While not a huge step forward from previous efforts, *Blending Destiny* is a worthy continuation of the atmospheric sound this duo has been delivering since the turn of the century. *Max Herman*

**TOUANE
FIGURA**

Persona/GER/CD

Italian DJ and producer Marco Tonni started out as a teenage rocker before moving on to electronics, and he apparently still dabbles in a range of music: His second album, *Figura*, is supposedly inspired by jazz, the tracks representing an imaginary girl's "emotional mirror." But there's little jazz feel to the minimal techno here, with no melodic lines anchoring the experimentation. Best to ignore the bombastic concept, then, and dive into the sparse layers he builds atop often-squelchy beats, softened with hazy edges. Though the album can feel self-indulgent, a few tracks, such as "She Let Some Light In," stand out. Not a wildfire, maybe, but some heat nonetheless. *Luciana Lopez*

**WAX TAILOR
HOPE AND SORROW**

Decon/US/CD

The French instrumental hip-hop virtuoso returns with a much sunnier outing than his previous brilliant work. It's better than the majority of instro-hop worldwide, but lighter on the cinematic feel and heavier on the collabs. Songbird Charlotte Savary shows up again on compelling tracks like "The Man With No Soul," "To Dry Up," and the rewarding finale "Alien in My Belly," as do rhymer The Others on "House of Wax." But it is the Dap Queen herself, Sharon Jones, who steals the spotlight on the disc's soulful opening salvo, "The Way We Lived." Poet Ursula Rucker bats cleanup on "We Be," but it continues to be Wax Tailor's impeccably timed instrumentals that hit the homeruns. *Scott Thill*

**YACHT
I BELIEVE IN YOU, YOUR MAGIC IS REAL**

Marriage/US/CD

If hot records from Panther and Copy are any indication, 2007 seems to be a year when indie rockers are ditching their guitars for bedroom-soul records. Yacht's latest record, *I Believe in You, Your Magic Is Real*, is epic enough to be their *Thriller*. Normally one half of The Blow, Jona Bechtolt combines everything from layered dance tracks to *Labyrinth*-era Bowie, and the record's joyous jams are strengthened by collaborations with Bobby Birdman and Eats Tapes. "So Post All 'Em" opens with some soft acoustic layers before "See a Penny Pick It Up" knocks out a dance-in-your-undies Casio romp. Exploring indie R&B without drenching it in irony, *I Believe in You, Your Magic Is Real* is a crowning achievement. *Josiah Hughes*

**ZEPH & AZEEM
RISE UP**

Om/US/CD

Bay Area hip-hop is bifurcated: You're either aboard hyphy's yellow bus or delving into the veracity of "the message" whilst grazing through *Roget's Thesaurus*. DJ Zeph and MC Azeem certainly fall into the latter category, but without getting too serious about themselves or anyone else. *Rise Up* provides attitude from the old school, before homogenized radio edits and chart placement concerns. Established remixer and producer *par excellence* Zeph fires up his 808 and 1200s to lay down funk and jazz cuts, Caribbean and Latin styles, and dub into a zesty groove, upon which playwright and slam poetry champ Azeem rides with his heady lyrics and deeper truth. Go smart! *Stacy Meyn*



Gudrun Gut

**GUDRUN GUT
I PUT A RECORD ON**

Monika/GER/CD

Gudrun Gut has come a long way since the rage and industrial clang of Einstürzende Neubauten. The old art terrorism is gone—now the veteran Berlin post-punk artist/Ocean Club DJ lures listeners into her rabbit hole with her debut solo LP. They fall into a netherworld where the ghosts of Weimar cabaret and arcane polka drift into digital-dub space. Fragments of accordion melodies and oomph-pah rhythms brilliantly snake into "Move Me," and "Girlboogie 6" is juke-joint rockabilly that may end up in a David Lynch fever dream someday. The centerpiece, the dubby "Sweet," sleeps on a crowded subway seat, but dreams of floating on a moonless sea. The only catch is that Gut limits her vocals to a chanteuse whisper and risks repeating a cliché that sunk trip-hop a decade ago. Otherwise, *I Put a Record On* still steps over the timid minimalism that shackles much German techno. *Cameron Macdonald*

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Out Now

FABRICLIVE. 33 Is a filthy, fiery, party mix from Baltimore's chart-topping hip-hopping bass connection, *Spank Rock*. Mashing together the banging electro pulse of Para One, Kano's grimey sway, flirty punk funk from CSS, and the dirty hustle of Rick Ross, along with exclusive *Spank Rock* edits and grooves, this is the soundtrack to the best party you've never been to.



Available 6.19.07

This is a warm, deep escape into the mind of the Berliner Ellen Allien, techno innovator and imaginative creator of the label BPitch Control. Ellen calls out to the music lovers with a mix that mingles glitchy breakbeats, elegant poppy vocals and experimental elements with twitches of electro and deep techno basslines. Rejoice at the sounds of Larry Heard, Damian Schwartz, Cobblestone Jazz while your chest swells inside Thom Yorke's vocals and the distinctly sweet tones of Ben Klock and Apparat.



Available 7.17.07

This mix joins the dots between classic hip hop and power pop fuelled dancefloor nu breaks making a mix that is nothing short of summertime fun! It's a funky up fusion of bad ass booty basslines, killer old school acapellas, and chin stroking VIP nods to the big dons of the scene including the Plump DJs, A.Skillz, Deekline & Ed Solo, Aquasky, the Freestylers and of course Krafty Kuts himself. Krafty blends that wanton 3am sublimely raucous sound into 75 minutes of treats and beats for your feet. If this mix doesn't make you wiggle, nothing will.



Forthcoming artists in the series: Ewan Pearson, Marcus Intalex, Ricardo Villalobos, James Murphy, Steve Bug, Justice.

www.fabriclondon.com



Madlib

Comp Reviews 6.07

A poetic diatribe spit-like-fire over a collage of hard hitting hip-hop, anguished neo-soul, and gritty, portishead-esque dirges.
For fans of: Mos Def, Immortal Technique, Saul Williams, Portishead and The Roots

5.15.07

AMIR
Sulaiman
LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

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FEATURING GUEST SPOTS FROM
KYLEAH PRIEST and BLUE RASBERRY

iCON
THE MIC KING
Mike & the Fatman LP

Intelligent yet cryptic lyricism, delivered with rapid fire precision from this ex-battle champ.
For fans of: Pharoahe Monch, Mr. Lif, MF Doom and Wu Tang Clan.

OUT NOW

myspace.com/iconthemicking

ALL BANDS ON TOUR NOW

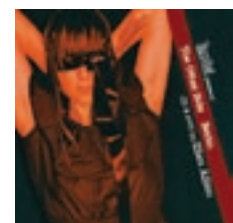
I Am the Ocean

I Am the Ocean
...and your city needs swallowing

Post hardcore prog rock, ironically fusing sublime melody with chaotic overtures, and heart pounding rhythms.
For fans of: Deftones, Isis, Coheed and Cambria, Botch and Mastodon.

OUT NOW

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TEUTONIC TECHNO TOURISM AND SOCAL'S HIP-HOP UNDERGROUND INSPIRE TWO CD-DVD COLLECTIONS.

ELLEN ALLIEN: TIME OUT PRESENTS THE OTHER SIDE-BERLIN

Deaf, Dumb + Blind/US/CD-DVD

MADLIB + PEANUT BUTTER WOLF: TIME OUT PRESENTS THE OTHER SIDE-LOS ANGELES

Deaf, Dumb + Blind/US/CD-DVD

There is a myth about California that just won't die. All you need to know about the Golden State is "its surf, sunshine, and girls who are "Out there having fun/In the warm California sun." Folks like The Riveiras and The Beach Boys brilliantly created that everlasting myth, and countless tourist bureaus sold it for decades. It's a lie that keeps the sales taxes flowing, and leaves many seekers disappointed when they reach the end of the American frontier.

It's something to keep in mind when absorbing these two *Time Out* magazine-sponsored travel guides to the "other side" of Los Angeles and Berlin. The packages include DVD tours where German techno star Ellen Allien and leftfield hip-hop maven Peanut Butter Wolf show off their favorite haunts, shops, eats, and hideouts in both cities. Both videos give helpful pointers for rather minuscule slices of two enormous metropolises, but the heart of the *Other Side* series lies in the DJ mixes that accompany each DVD—they're tailored soundtracks to visiting the cities, two impressionistic autobiographies that internalize their hometowns' myths.

Allien's Berlin is a forest that emerged through the ruins of war. In her video guide, there are reoccurring shots of vast, green park lawns and thick groves that break up the grays and silvers of a renewed city once broken in half by the Berlin Wall. Her mix of microhouse, techno, and '70s Cold War glam embodies the myth of Berlin as a phoenix, all mechanically pristine and rigidly ordered, but overshadowed by a quiet uneasiness. Allien locks into a minimalist groove that's suitable for one's earphones when walking through a downtown scene and imagining that life around you is somehow programmed in a rhythm. Even with transsexual punk Wayne County's taunts on the track "Berlin," the libertine music is still chained to an auto-piloted beat. Allien references the myth of old West Berlin as a skag heaven for the refugees of the free world with her choice of David Bowie's "Heroes."

Bobo Shanti later points to the slums where "There is no place to sleep/There is nothing to eat" in the grim, dub-tech blues of Rhythm & Sound's "Poor People." Allien's set ends in discord, where AGF croons cryptic lyrics like "So many years of my life still to go" amid rambling beats and warehouse cacophony. It's a moment when one runs out of places to go and has no idea of what to do next, except wait.

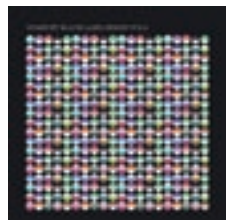
Madlib's Los Angeles is a former paradise that's wearied by perfect weather and endless sprawl. He first shoves the listener out of his car and onto an L.A. freeway in the hard-bop meltdown of The Lightmen Plus One's "Energy Control Center." Even the nightscape groove of Cybotron's Detroit techno classic "Clear" gets muddled into a wreck in the "Lib's hands. Madlib's mix of heavy-funk, hip-hop, and dub illustrates L.A.'s sprawl as a harbor where many ships crash in the night. The myth of L.A. as the American Babylon destined for nuclear cleansing is evoked here in Sun Ra's "Nuclear War," where the cult-jazz icon reminds us, "Motherfucker, don't you know?/When they push that button/Your ass gotta go." Madlib later cracks a smile at the blues of unemployment by foisting on us a lecture from jazz crooner Mark Murphy about "Slipping in the backdoor unannounced/Smelling like a bad check when it's bounced." It's all summed up by the disc's best cut—the game-show funk of Harris & Orr's "Spread Love"—where a comedian spouts questionable Californian rhetoric: It's "The land of fruits and nuts/If you ain't a fruit/You're damn near nuts!" Cameron Macdonald



Ben Watt

BUZZIN' FLY VOL. 4 MIXED BY BEN WATT

Buzzin' Fly/UK/CD
After his Everything But the Girl days, Ben Watt immersed himself in an electronic cocoon only to emerge, butterfly-like, as a glittering club DJ/producer talent. The newest installment in Watt's DJ mix series (named after his own Buzzin' Fly imprint) crystallizes Watt's atmospheric approach to the big-room dancefloor: Smooth, ambient-infused tech-house hovers and floats, letting airy melodies arc gently into the next driving sequence. Lovers of non-cheesy trance will enjoy Kimouts' blissed-out yet funky epic, "Down to Earth," which offers one of the strongest (and most pop-friendly) examples of this compilation's supple "nu-rave" style. Check out Watt's quintessential 2 a.m.-trance build-up in his bouncy cut "Just a Blip," which harkens back to the golden days of the mid-'90s. *Janet Tzou*



**ALIAS
COLLECTED REMIXES**

Anticon/US/CD
This Anticon MC-turned-producer is a standout beatsmith with exceptional style. His latest, *Collected Remixes*, contains the expected trademarks: sharp samples, smooth synths, and drum-fueled change-ups. With remixes of John Vanderslice, Sixtoo, The One AM Radio, and Lali Puna amongst others, the project is evenhanded, allowing the production to compliment the vocals without clamor or clutter. The album's highpoint, "Into the Trees," is a remix of 13 & God, which, like the album, illustrates an attention to detail and pacing. Needless to say, Alias adapts seamlessly to the diverse cast and packs power into the disc's 11 tracks. Recommended. *David Ma*

COLOMBIA! THE GOLDEN YEARS OF DISCOS FUENTES

Soundway/US/CD
Frenetic and kinetic, chaotic and cathartic: For pure passion, there's little out there in the musical world to challenge the likes of *Colombia! The Golden Years of Discos Fuentes*, a collection of recordings from the '60s and '70s vaults of Discos Fuentes. The words are familiar: salsa, cumbia, fandango, and rumba. Some of the sounds will tickle your memory—Lito Barrientos' filmic "Cumbia

En Do Menor" might be from one of Jim Jarmusch's long, panning cityscapes; Afrosound's "Pacífico" lilts like West African highlife given a Masters at Work live-percussion treatment. But the tireless drive apparent through *Colombia!*'s 20 tracks—each as emotionally heavy-hitting, and as foot-numbingly danceable as its neighbor—makes this a thoroughly fresh, if rough, ride. *Justin Hopper*

COMPOST BLACK LABEL SERIES VOL. 2

Compost/GER/CD
Compost built a name as a superlative label for warm, jazzy house; its *Black Label Series*, which launched two years ago, is a marked departure: a blend of tech, funk, and disco, targeted like a dancefloor missile. One thing remains the same—the quality. The 12-inches collected here groove dark and relentless, with unflagging energy. There's so much that's good it's hard to pick a standout: The full sound of the Windy City house-inspired "Chicago"? The squelchy acid of "Lazise"? The uptempo cover of Robert Armani's classic "Circus Bells"? Why waste your time picking favorites when they're all white-hot? *Luciana Lopez*

CTM: CLUB TRANSMEDIALE

Rx:Tx/SLO/2CD
CTM documents Berlin's annual Club Transmediale festival of experimental music, and some of the ancient sounds found herein manage to achieve a grace that no laptop or damaged guitar can touch. The string solo on "Atabat," by Syrian classical masters The Omar Souleyman Band, has a taunting trickster's voice in its bewitching chords, which were perhaps just as arresting centuries ago as they are today. Some standouts include O.S.T.'s haunting string drones on "Synken," Frivolous' ring-a-ding-ding microhouse, and Like a Tim's spaced-out Atari 5200 acid-techno. But at times, the kitchen-sink eclecticism leaves an uneven mess, and a glib and skuzzy death-metal and noisecore element vandalizes *CTM*. *Cameron Macdonald*

DJ N-TYPE: DUBSTEP ALLSTARS VOL. 5

Tempa/UK/CD
Reviewing this 38-track mix of bleak, urban, jaggedly rhythmic music on a sunny SoCal day induces some wicked cognitive dissonance. Suffice it to say, the fifth edition of Tempa's indispensable *Dubstep Allstars* series is the antithesis of the archetypal, easygoing West Coast vibe. DJ N-Type keeps the mood claustrophobically nocturnal and menacingly stark with incessant waves of rude bass pressure and rib-cracking snares and kicks, as dubstep fixtures like Benga, Skream, and Loefah spark friction against cuts by lesser-knowns Coki, Magnetic Man, and Tes La Rock. No matter where you hear *Dubstep Allstars*, though, you will be thrust ears-first into an East London vortex of sinister low frequencies and beats that do GBH. Hertz so good. *Dave Segal*

ED REC VOL. 2

Ed Banger-Vice/US/CD
Run by Daft Punk manager/DJ Pedro Winter (a.k.a. Busy P), French label Ed Banger mostly goes for concise, maximalist dancefloor impact, without being monolithic about it. Here, potential breakout artist Uffie pushes ghetto-debutante electro rap for people who think Peaches beats around the bush. Justice's three-day-stubble-ruff tech-electro is the comp's most DJ-friendly specimen, its thuggish glam funk extrapolating on *Homework*'s template, as does Mr. Flash with more Glitter Band girth. Ed Banger is essentially about high and low frequencies—the ones that reflexively inspire you to raise your hands and lower your morals. Like its predecessor, *Ed Rec Vol. 2* is bravura party music with a lewd yet charming French accent. *Dave Segal*

FABRICLIVE 33: SPANK ROCK

Fabric/UK/CD
Spank Rock's edition of the now-famed *FabricLive* series is fine, fortified junk food for the soul. The B-More crew typically delivers hip-hop that sounds like it's powered by stolen streetlight electricity. This DJ mix enters an alternate universe where yuppie-rock classics by Yes and The Romantics click into post-DFA grooves and ride alongside reminders that electroclash didn't always curse the earth it walked upon (i.e. Miss Kittin's "Stock Exchange Woman"). The sleaze element is ripe here, but the impromptu raps that call for sing-alongs or brag about being badass sometimes upset the mix's flow: Such a sin befouls Kano's Italo-disco classic "I'm Ready." Otherwise, drink deep and don't drive. *Cameron Macdonald*

FUSE PRESENTS STEVE BUG

Music Man/BEL/CD
Germany's Steve Bug has always been something of an anomaly: A minimal techno DJ with a deep-house soul who managed to embody the divisions between his own trio of stylistically distinct labels (Poker Flat, Dessous, and Audiomatique). Bug's new Fuse

mix skips through tech-house territory with trademark style: Big dancefloor tracks get heavily doused with techno and clean melodies, all expertly nestled within his easy manipulation of tricky rhythms. Johnny Dangerous' familiar refrain "Beat That Bitch" delivers an old-school house throwback, while Bug's own beat study, "Wet," is a stand-out rhythmic cut. A solid precursor to your next club night out. *Janet Tzou*

HOT CHIP: DJ-KICKS

!K7/US/CD
Hot Chip's music is pristinely English: its playfulness and irony, its hinted melancholy, its self-deprecating smirk. The risk in letting a group like this behind the decks—a band whose chaotic pop is as jumbled as it is studio-perfect—is that the urge to show off wide-ranging tastes rather than simply scope out a great selection. No worries: Rather than some Bill Burroughs cut-up, Hot Chip's *DJ-Kicks* installment reads like James Joyce. Its stream of consciousness takes in pop and rock (Joe Jackson, New Order), soul hip-hop (Etta James, Positive K), minimalist house and techno, and Hot Chip's own dancefloor rave-pop. Yet despite stylistic hops, the resultant whole is indeed greater than the sum of its multifaceted parts. *Justin Hopper*

MODESELEKTOR: BOOGYBYTES VOL 3

B-Pitch/GER/CD
B-Pitch darlings Gernot Bronsert and Sebastian Szary scare up a whole slew of strange techno and glitch tracks and hammer them together into one of the weirder mixes I've heard in a long time. Still, it manages to hang together and be as goofy and enjoyable as their original productions. New stuff from Flying Lotus, Phon.o, Spank Rock, and Skream jostles up against oldies but goodies from Mr. Oizo, Mu-Ziq, and even Radiohead. The Modeselektor-produced TDC track "Une Bande de Mec Sympa" takes the cake, but the whole thing comes across as wonderfully uncaring of public opinion, much like Modeselektor themselves. *Matt Earp*

NITIN SAWHNEY: IN THE MIND OF NITIN SAWHNEY

District 6/UK/CD
Over two decades, London producer/musician Nitin Sawhney has worked on an impressive list of projects, including film scores (ie. the excellent Cirque du Soleil soundtrack to *Varekai*), commercials, and his own dexterous records. For chapter one in an ongoing series, District 6 tapped Sawhney's inquisitive *Mind*, which proves to be rich and downtempo-heavy: D'Angelo's "Brown Sugar," Massive Attack's "Teardrop" (as well as their remix of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan), and One Self's excellent "Be Your Own" are mixed graciously. The blending of Ojos de Brujo into Paco de Lucía connects the cross-generational approach Sawhney himself has so capably represented on the face of global music. *Derek Beres*

SOLID STEEL PRESENTS DJ FOOD & DK: NOW, LISTEN AGAIN!

Ninja Tune/UK/CD
British collective DJ Food originally made its name in the '90s by providing selectors with tasty breaks, but the tables have turned in the new millennium. On their latest, the crew joins forces with fellow Brit DK for the genre-melting mix *Now, Listen Again!* Sure, they often employ the familiar mash-up method of mixing, though this party-to-go is far-reaching enough to not sound trite. When not giving Eric B & Rakim classics a Timbaland makeover and vice-versa, DJ Food and DK manipulate instrumentals by New Order or just let reggae riddims ride. As much music as they take on, it's dumbfounding how seamless this mix truly is. *Max Herman*

TELEFON TEL AVIV: REMIXES COMPILED

Hefty/US/CD
You don't have to like New Orleans-based duo Telefon Tel Aviv, or the artists they've remixed over the last seven years, to like this compilation—each song here sounds less like one or the other, and more like a new beast. However, hardcore followers of Charles Cooper and Joshua Eustis might notice their dense, trippy style everywhere: Nine Inch Nails' "Even Deeper," John Hughes III' "Got Me Lost/Driving in L.A.," and Apparat's "Komponent" are reason enough to buy. Others, like a Bebel Gilberto version, approach Café Del Mar-style anonymity. But generally, TTA's production imparts a night-blooming, wide-eyed shine that can make anything, even indie mopers American Analog Set, unbelievably sexy. *Rachel Shimp*

THE ROUGH GUIDE TO BOLLYWOOD GOLD

World Music Network/US/CD
To many unfamiliar with the complex forms of Indian music, Bollywood has been a happy entry point. Like American pop, *filmi* tunes (and the movies they are born from) are big business. Around the time Motown was mass-producing R&B superstars, the Indian film industry was stockpiling radios with sisters Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle, the extremely funky Mohd Rafi, and, true to the flexible nature of Indian

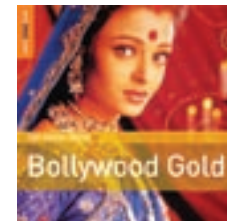
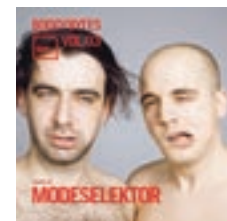
culture, a yodeling saint of a singer named Kishore Kumar. This 15-track compilation is from the industry's golden age (1960-'80). Rough, fuzzy, analog, and brilliant, these are the Marvin's and Supremes of their day, in a style still going strong. *Derek Beres*

THE UPSETTER SELECTION: A LEE PERRY JUKEBOX

Trojan/US/CD
Would you trust a man who burned down his own studio to do justice to his musical archives? Lee "Scratch" Perry dresses down his production genius by acting like a charming acid casualty, but his blunt stunts suggest a master prankster. He shows a similar sly wit on this soulful and eclectic overview of his career. Given just two discs, anyone would struggle to assemble the definitive Upsetter greatest-hits collection. Perry forgoes that route, charting an eccentric course that captures his independent spirit (check the diss track against Trojan founder Chris Blackwell) while indirectly hitting all the pertinent historical markers. *Patrick Sisson*

TOBIAS THOMAS: PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE

Kompakt/GER/CD
Tobias Thomas has one of the lightest, deftest touches of any techno DJ. On acclaimed mixes like *Für Dich* and *Smallville*, he injects the often-predictable techno DJ mix disc with a warm intimacy and crafty narrative arc; he'd rather massage your temples than bang your head. *Please Please Please* is the German selector's strangest and best effort yet. Beginning with a trio of weird ambient cuts (two by Pantha Du Prince), Thomas gradually shifts into odd microhouse/minimal techno specimens (highlights are contributions from Villalobos and Kooky Scientist) then U-turns into a three-track denouement of radical pop transformations (clever electro-pop covers of The Smiths and Fleetwood Mac classics). This is the rare mix CD you can put on repeat. *Dave Segal*



Jeremy P. Caulfield

JEREMY P. CAULFIELD: DETACHED WORKS [01]

Dumb-Unit/GER/2CD
Since 2000, Toronto native Jeremy Caulfield has been championing challenging minimal techno via his Dumb-Unit company. While this imprint hasn't garnered the hipster cachet of other labels of comparable quality, its track record is among the strongest in the world. *Detached Works [01]* is a double-barraged salvo of pelvis-swiveling minimal techno that reasserts just how excellent Caulfield's reign as producer, DJ, and A&R man has been. Disc One offers a sampling of D-U's hottest specimens from the last two years. Thoroughbred minimalist producers like Butane, Sweet N Candy, Alejandro Vivanco, and Caulfield himself explore the quirky and the scientific with equal fervor. The results strike a balance between Orac's and Perlon's hedonistic yet rigorous aesthetics. Disc Two finds Caulfield mixing 21 tracks from his pals (including Osvaldo, Barem, Franco Cinelli, and Italoboyz), straight from the techno illuminati's private stashes. It's all deep, strange, aerodynamic, and zipping-down-the-Autobahn fantastic. *Dave Segal*



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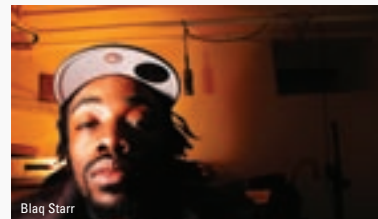


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Basic Needs By Kid Kameleon

LOW-END NECESSITIES, FROM RAGGA TO DUBSTEP AND BEYOND



Blaq Starr



Apparat



Filewile

A lot of tracks that have been kicking around for a year or more are finally seeing the light of day. Producers, send out that 20th demo CD, because good music eventually does find its right place and time.

For example, Glasgow's **Rustie** managed to land near the top of my "best of" producers list in '06 without releasing a single track. Now five tunes are out on the *Jagz the Smack* EP from Stuff Records. Completely brilliant stuff across many tempos, buzzing synths taking you from hip-hop to grime via electro, all with heavy, infectious bounce. He's one to watch, with plenty of unsigned tracks ready to go.

I also got two recent releases out of Germany woven into the hip-hop/electro matrix. One is **Apparat's** chunky digital dub single "Hold On" b/w "Fractales," on Shitkatapult, which boasts great remixes by **Modeselektor** and **Chris de Luca vs. Phon.o**. The other is **Filewile's** "Damn" (feat. RQM) b/w "Forward" (feat. Rider Safique) on Mouthwatering. Poland/NYC/Berlin MC **RQM** has never sounded better (also check his new LP with **The Tape** on Kitty-Yo entitled *Public Transport*), and a thumping B-More-inflected remix by Swiss group **Round Table Knights** (plus digi-hop from Berlin's **Jahcoozi**) make this a great teaser for Filewile's forthcoming full-length.

A year after releasing the **Bonde de Role** EP, Diplo's Mad Decent label is finally getting around to its second record, a fun but strange seven-tracker from Baltimore **DJ Blaq Starr**, the *Supastarr* EP. All sorts of collisions between soul, house, and hip-hop that only make sense in Baltimore. Fans of **Spank Rock** should definitely check it.

LXC's consistently great Alpacut label is back with its sixth release: jungle for serious beat heads from Berlin's **Martsman** ("Jumpfunk") and Leipzig's **MZE** ("Blut"), both ultra-crisp and never-boring tracks, on the choppage/drum-funk end of the D&B spectrum with techno overtones. Roughing up the drums big time are **Mad EP** (now of London) and France's **Ra**, going head-to-head with clattering hip-hop beats on the *Ultrafood* EP; these dark but beautiful experiments just came out on Ad Noiseam.

Not to be outdone, America answers back with Portland-based Lo Dubs, launched as a sub-label for Lozonofono Records. The first two releases are limited-run, one-sided 7-inches in hand-stitched sleeves, the first from Philly's **Starkey** (the awesome, paranoid, lo-fi dubstepper "Dementia") and the second a dub-beat collaboration between **Alter Echo**, **ERS1**, and **Dr. Israel** entitled "Dubwise."

Caracas, Venezuela's **Cardopusher**, who's fresh off a breakcore release on Belgium's Wood label, is now ready to conquer dubstep with his intense energy. The *Down to the Wire* EP is forthcoming on Terminal Dusk, and it's a totally untouchable fusion of Cardo's South American influences, pop-sample frenetics, dubstep, breaks, and the straight-up weird. Great remixes by Starkey and **Atki2** as well.

It was my pleasure to see S.F. dubstepper **Djunya** storm a party in May, dropping both "Coagulated Dub" and "Ites," which will be on Narco.Hz 006, **Juju's** very strong dubstep label. Cheers to Djunya, too, for getting some full-tempo tunes out there for the dancing crowd! Also gotta give a final shout to a group of Belgian producers fusing grime and dubstep in the style of **The Plastician** and **M.R.K.1-Grimelock**, **Saviour**, **Alchemyst**, and **Burn0** blew me away with tunes on the *B Dubs* mix: They deliver a sound sorely lacking in the scene at the moment, and lots of their tunes are coming out on an upcoming Aeclectrick Records compilation. Get the mix for free while it lasts at www.grimelock.com.



Reggae Rewind By Ross Hogg

THE HEARSAY AND DOWNLOW ON DANCEHALL, DUB, ROOTS, AND LOVERS ROCK



Wayne Wonder



Marcia Griffiths

Can peace in the Middle East be far off? **Vybz Kartel** and **Mavado** squashed their beef recently when things threatened to get even more out of hand. Their war spawned several lyrical volleys—often on the same riddim—and even third-party songs by other artists, begging them to make peace. But fear not, fight fans: There's always **Bounty Killer** and **Beenie Man**.

Speaking of wars, one of dancehall's most decorated battlers, **Ninja Man**, is stirring things up again with "Art of War" on the new No Fear riddim (Juke Boxx), which finds the Original Don Gorgon singing the hook and deftly speeding his way through the verses. The riddim also has hot cuts from **Macka Diamond**, **Vybz**, and **Elephant Man** and **T.O.K.**

Ravers Clavers dance-crew member **Overmars** teams up with **Mr. Vegas** on "Raging Bull," which bigs up the hit dance of the same name. It's available on the new *Regga Ragga Ragga 2007* (Greensleeves) alongside 17 other big tunes from the last several months (like Vegas's hit "Killa Swing" and contributions from **Tony Matterhorn**, **Future Fambo**, and **Beenie Man**).

Stephen McGregor's ascent into the ranks of the hottest producers continues with the Tremor riddim. Not unlike his recent Power Cut riddim, Tremor is a dark, fast-paced track with a particularly stellar contribution from **Assassin** and **Mr. Easy**, whose aptly named "Big Man Ting" is in a dead heat with Mavado's "Amazing Grace" for the riddim's hottest tune. Incidentally, Vybz Kartel voices two tunes on Tremor without so much as a mention of his recent enemy. Instead, he uses "Wine Mi Gyal" to praise his lady because she "nuh smell like camphor ball." Long live love songs.

Ward 21 is back—on both vocals and production—with the Rae riddim. It's filled with boom tunes from veteran DJs like **Spragga Benz**, **Frisco Kid**, **Mr. Lexx** and **Cobra**, as well as young artists like **Mr. Peppa** and

Timberlee. The pounding riddim has a late-'90s vibe that works like a charm in the dance and functions nicely as a bridge between the old and the new.

Even though the Sizzurp riddim has been out for a minute, it's still gaining momentum. The hard-hitting, uber-electronic track has been graced with vocals from **Delly Ranx**, Vybz Kartel featuring **Nuclear**, a rare dance track from **Sizzla**, and an odd interpolation of **Justin Timberlake's** "SexyBack" by **Christopher**. But it's veteran singer **Wayne Wonder** (featuring **Chicken**) who scores biggest of all with "Take It Off," in which he makes it rain Jamaica dollars on *di gal dem*.

On the classic side of things, there's a new anthology of the works of one of reggae's greatest vocalists: **Marcia Griffiths**, an original member of the **I-Threes**. The compilation, *Melody Life*, includes classics from her four decades of recording such as "Electric Boogie," "Young, Gifted & Black" (alongside **Bob Andy**), "Oh My Darling," and the timeless "Feel Like Jumping." All in all, a beautiful tribute to an amazing artist.

I'd be remiss if I didn't tall up what could be dancehall's Official Summer Jam for 2007: "China Wine Remix" by **Geisha** featuring Tony Matterhorn, Elephant Man, and **Wyclef**. All nationality-confusion issues aside (aren't geishas, um, Japanese?), this all-out dancefloor assault, with an energy level that rivals soca, is like the second coming of the Dutty Wine.

On a sad note, San Francisco's **Wisdom Records** will be closing its doors at the end of July. For years now, the store—run by **I-Vier** of **Jah Warrior Shelter HiFi**—has been the Bay Area's top spot for reggae records, mix CDs, and DVDs. The staff was as hospitable as they were knowledgeable. They will be missed.



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After Silence By Martin De Leon THE OUTER ORBITS OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC



Roman Revutsky



OO100

Record companies: Who needs 'em? This month, I talk about young microlabels operating on smarter, more aesthetically pleasing platforms: digital and indie. (Booty shorts and turntables not included.)

But first, let us pay our respects to New York's greatest experimental music venue, **Tonic**, which closed its doors forever in April due to months of unpaid rent. **Yoko Ono, John Zorn, Borbetomagus**, and hundreds more, all shared stage space during this venue's legendary nine-year history. You will be missed, Tonic.

Wipe those tears, though, because Canadian blip-rock is going to make it all okay. **Azeda Booth** consists of six guys that use Autechre-heavy IDM with faint touches of rock on their awesome, self-released EP *Mysterious Body*. Though rock usually weighs heavier than electronics, in these five tracks of acid techno and atmospheric guitars, it's the other way around. Labels should stalk this band.

Nothing beats walking into a disgusting bar in Brooklyn and discovering a great, weird band. **Aa** (pronounced "big A, little A") is a quintet that just uses drums and synthesizers on *gAame* (Gigantic), and pounds out beautiful, soft, nonsensical jams.

The Social Registry label is like a weird cult. Their new monthly 7" series, *The Social Club*, requires you to subscribe on their website (www.thesocialregistry.com) and then vinyl magically shows up at your door! Folks as diverse as **Jena Malone** and the weirdoes from **Gang Gang Dance** are involved. Why can't the rest of the world be so genius?

Smarty-pants producer **Boom Bip** has teamed up with **Super Furry Animals** singer **Gruff Rhys** for the shit-hot project **Neon Neon**. Dancefloors should tremble at their first single, "Trick for Treat" (Lex), where a dirty electro beat is perfect for guest MC **Spank Rock** to quote The Velvet Underground: "I'm waiting for my man." Bananas, people.

Tiny Soundsister Records is another amazing new label. Their latest is by Siberian hermit **Roman Revutsky**, who sings over large-hearted pop with classicist IDM beats on the EP *Incomplete*. "Collateral" is reason enough to buy this record, where Roman sounds just like Ian Curtis under a dark, synth-laced track. You probably won't be able to find it on iTunes, though. That is where indie record shop Other Music comes in. Later this year, the legendary Manhattan store, known for its experimental and out-there selection, will open a digital download site offering high-quality MP3s of hundreds of obscure albums. Check www.othermusic.com for updates.

Philly label Burnt Toast Vinyl will also get help from Other Music's online store as it puts out some great rare post-rock stuff. Their double-LP set of four new bands—including gloomy rockers **Foxhole**, Swedish instrumentalists **The Magic Lantern**, brilliant ambient duo **Soporus**, and doom electronics from **Questions of the Dialect**—is one of the most memorable releases this year.

In other news, **Architecture in Helsinki** signed to Polyvinyl and will be releasing the 12" single "Heart it Races," with remixes by Yacht and DJ /rupture this month. New York supergroup **Artanker Convoy** makes pretty drone jazz on the brilliant *Cozy Endings* (The Social Registry, again), while spazzy Japanese band **OO100**'s remix EP, *The Eye Remix* (Thrill Jockey), finds Boredoms lead singer Yamatsuka Eye re-working four tracks into endless crazy-eyed techno. Clearing dancefloors has never sounded so good!



Leftfield Guest Reviews: Julian Fane

There are two distinctly different sides to Vancouver producer/programmer/instrumentalist Julian Fane: There's the behind-the-scenes-boyfriend man in Lynx and Ram, a noisy electronic-punk group he co-founded with his girlfriend Carli Vierke in 2005, whose latest for Sublight, *The System's on and it's Flashing Red*, is a more rockin' affair than the label is used to. Then there's front-man Fane, who produces icy, melodious, shoegaze vocal-IDM for Planet Mu, the latest release of which, *Our New Quarters*, swirls in the vein of M83 and Autechre. He may not be a DJ, but Fane's ear for leftfield sounds is unchallenged by any fool with a turntable, so we tapped him for his latest favorite finds.
Aaron Ashley
www.myspace.com/julianfane

DANDI WIND "SEARCHING FLESH" white/CAN/download
I just saw Dandi Wind in New York and it was one of the best shows I have seen this year: rototom rolls, saw waves, and Dandi jumping around in some Jim Henson-sausage-link-Muppet-gut tunic. The recording of this song doesn't do the live version justice. Hopefully on her next LP, Dandi will ditch the drum machines and record her drummer. *Julian Fane*

I, CACTUS (A.K.A. KHONNOR) "GREEN CACTUS" [FROM *I, CACTUS* MINI-LP] 8bitpeoples/US/CD
Someone sent this one to me, and while it's not the kind of thing I would normally be into, for some reason I keep putting it on. Pretty standard SID sounds, but used with a lot of taste and restraint. Makes me want to buy a Monomachine. *Julian Fane*

DATCH'I "THE REGULATOR" [FROM *13*] Sublight/CAN/CD
This Bad Brains cover is a track from Datch'i's forthcoming album *13*. Joseph Fraioli takes Bad Brains' original hardcore sludge and beast-whips it into lo-fi digi-punk. This is one of the few covers I have ever heard that not only stands up to the original, but carries its themes forward in a completely complimentary direction. The track is so good; it's just too bad it's only one minute long. Just play it 10 times in a row like I do. *Julian Fane*

DNTEL "DUMB LUCK" [FROM *DUMB LUCK*] Sub Pop/US/CD
This song just washes over you. Its four parts are each so perfect that on a lesser artist's album they would be stretched out to four full-length tracks. The synth that opens the track is probably the best single sound I have heard all year. *Julian Fane*

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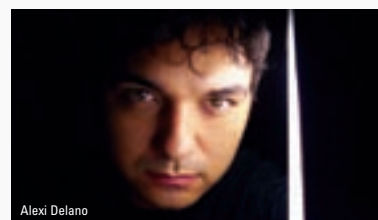


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Bubble Metropolis
By **M1 Tronik**
TECHNO: MINIMAL, BANGING, AND BEYOND



Keeping up with techno these days takes real dedication. With the insane number of producers, DJs, and retail outlets, it's easy to lose yourself in the crush of near countless productions from an array of sub-genres. But that's why groups like **Future Beat Investigators** are around. Probing deep into the vibe of tech, their *Discomedusa* (Member of the Trick) release is one part deep Detroit and one part sex track, which equals one ill-ass record. "All I Want" is the joint to rock.

Speaking of beat investigation, **Chris Fortier** found me on MySpace recently and soon after unleashed a slew of singles on me, most notably his *Remix EP 1* (Fade). This two-track collection of recent remixes features his take on **Alexi Delano's** nu-acid classic "Taste It," and on the b-side is Fortier's version of "West" by **Freaky Chakra**. Both are solid remixes and good firestarters on the dancefloor.

Another acid groover to keep an eye out for is the *Kabuto* EP by **Andreas Kaufelt & Tony Izui** (Frisbee). Tight beats and deep, expansive production keep things moving on both sides of this release, which would sound great up against any of the current works by the German trance/not-trance clique.

If melodic techno's your thing, grab **Chymera's** "Arabesque" b/w "Satura" release on Tishmango. Both tracks are impeccably produced: not quite soft enough to be called "listening music," but not quite rough enough for the dance. Try it out at sunrise and see what happens.

If crowd response is what you're looking for, I'd most definitely pick up *Nip Slip* from **Mattias Tanzmann** (Moon Harbour). The self-titled track on the a-side is a synth-chord banger that builds and builds and eventually explodes with fiery drums.

One of my favorites this month comes by way of **Tigerskin** and his *Heretofon* EP (Heimatmelodie). Bouncy, syncopated, and almost West Coast in feeling, this is purely funky, minimal techno. All four tracks are very good, but "Run," on the b-side, is particularly fierce, with a maddening melody and surprising percussion loop.

Tube & Berger's "Funky Shit" (Kittball), as the title suggests, is similarly funky. Oddly, the single only contains two remixes, one by Kompakt's **Gui Boratto** and the other by **Andrea Doria**. The original has yet to be released at press time. Regardless, this is good ass-shaking techno with electro leanings à la Great Stuff Recordings and Craft Music.

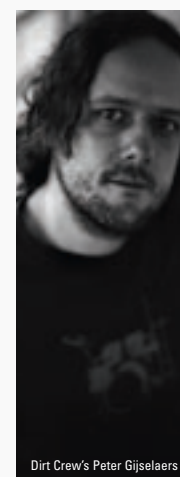
Also on the electro-techno space tip is **Miro Pajic** and his "Wired Worlds" 12" (Kiddaz.fm). There's a short refrain in the song that goes on about how we live in a wired world, but if you ask me, this sounds more like bits of a transmission from deep space. Lt. Thrace is on a mission to blow up a resurrection ship and might not make it back, y'all!

With an ability to match banging beats with moving melodies, **Tuomas Salmela** is back as **Phonogenic** and gives us his new one, *Swedish Taboo* (Dance Electric). All three tracks are stainless, sleek, and definitely dancefloor-friendly.

Finally this month we arrive at the new release from **John Dahlbäck**, *Power 2* (Giant Wheel). Dahlbäck is one of those guys who pumps out so much material you wonder how he's able to maintain so much energy and consistency. Heavy electro-techno beats on this effort, but you should really check for **Extrawelt's** remix on the flipside for a taste of real techno power.



En Tu Casa
By **Nick Chacona**
HOUSEKEEPING, FROM TECH AND MINIMAL TO DEEP AND TRADITIONAL



No matter what music you're into, pop will find its way there, even when it comes to house.

Radiohead singer **Thom Yorke** is the latest to be given the remix treatment, with **Slow To Speak's** and **Casa Mena's** respective takes on "The Eraser" (Slow to Speak) and "The Clock" (Got Soul) both receiving serious accolades across the house and tech-house communities. Another white-label mix entitled "What Is the Other Half," by one of NY's hottest producers operating under the guise of **Half Rabbit**, will be dropping shortly and will possibly be one of the most sought-after releases of the summer. Quoting one of my co-workers, it seems Thom has become the Jill Scott of 2007.

Another artist whose innovative sound has caught the attention of everyone from **Joe Clausell** to Universal Music France, **Henrik Schwarz** has had quite a run over the past few months with his recent *DJ-Kicks* compilation and mixes for **Kraak & Smaak**, **Marie Boine**, and **Camille**. In May, Henrik teamed up with longtime friend and collaborator **Sasse Lindblad's** Mood Music label to finally release "Walk Music," a tune that has been ready to go since 2003. It features the original version and also an update for 2007 that showcases Henrik's mastery of texture and tone. Also look out for the Mood 10-year-anniversary double-CD, the unsurprisingly titled *10 Years Anniversary Compilation*, which features both singles and exclusive unreleased tracks from **Dave DK**, **Spirit Catcher**, **Dirt Crew**, and even yours truly.

One of the most persistent labels of late is Jamie "**Jimpster**" Odell's Freerange Records. On tap for the coming months are bouncy, atmospheric tunes from the likes of **Milton Jackson**, **Trackheadz**, **Manuel Tur**, and **Macro Nacho**. And just in case you missed anything from the end of last year, the latest on the *Color Series* comps, *Green*, was

released recently, with hits such as **Blackjoy's** "Untitled" and **Square One's** "Vesuvius." Crazy, considering Odell himself has been knocking out prime-time mixes a-plenty these days, with five in the first four months of the year, including a mix of **Justin Martin's** classic "The Sad Piano" for Buzzin Fly's 25th release.

Worship Records, Philadelphia's home base for the dub-house sounds of **Rob Paine** and Co., has been relatively quiet as of late, but is poised for a big comeback with a massive new groover from **Hollis P. Monroe**. Not at all a release in the traditional Worship mold, "I Want to Thank You (Mother and Father)" has all the makings of a funky house bomb, with a gritty live bassline, sweet strings (à la Pepe Braddock's "Burnin'"), and a deep guitar breakdown for the summer outdoor terraces. On the flip, **Razoof & Emanuel's** "Quiero Agradecer" remix delves a bit deeper, replacing the live bass for a round sub, and adding a female vocal (reminiscent of Sueno Latino) and some swirling pads, making this a summer pleaser.

To close this column, I'd like to bid farewell to one of the most influential and longest-running independent dance-music record shops of all time. Charlie Grappone's Vinylmania, on Carmine Street in NYC, has finally shut its doors after almost 30 years of service to the dance-music community. Vinylmania was the first NY shop that I (and many others whom I've spoken with) ever set foot in. With records covering every inch of the store, it seemed to me the blueprint for so many shops I've around the world. R.I.P.



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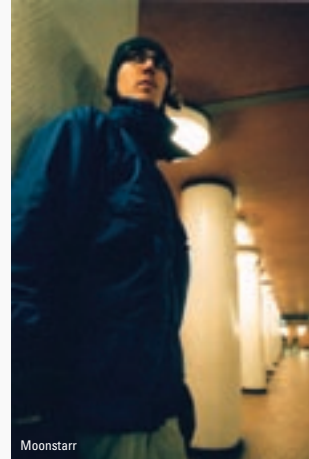


|| REVIEWS || COLUMNS



Broken Business By Peter Nicholson

FUTURE JAZZ AND BUSTED BEATS



Moonstarr



Timo Lassy

Great things come in tall packages. At least, that's the case with the world's hottest hockey-playing producer, better known as **Moonstarr**. His Public Transit Recordings label has a whole gang of stuff about ready to drop and it's my pleasure to tip you off to just a few. "Clappy" is a laid-back groove with a walking b-line, while "Broken Bossa" skips guitar, flute, and vocals along at a hotter pace over Moonstarr's trademark sharp-as-a-razor drum cuts. PTR also has stuff on the way from **Alister Johnston** and **Arch_Typ**, whose "33333" is a lurching, stop 'n' go funk monster!

Coming with a straighter beat, but oh-so-much soul that we'll forgive him, **Randolph** has sent forth one of the year's biggest tunes with "Believer" (Still Music). **Jazzanova** is at the top their remix game with a rumbling instrumental version that channels Detroit techno through their German jazz sensibilities. But don't sleep on the original, which is all warm and round bass, sweet piano licks, and Randolph's rich tenor—with a dash of sitar for that something extra.

Speaking of Detroit techno, heard one of those remixes you'll either think is brilliant or blasphemous—**Christian Prommer** (Fauna Flash, Truby Trio) flipping **Derrick May's** "Strings of Life" into a jazzy bossa nova slice. No doubt there's some hot licks, particularly on the keys, but it's not hard to imagine how the pioneering techno producer/DJ might react.

And now, a touch of jazz: Sax man **Timo Lassy** has another hot joint coming from Finland's quality purveyors, Ricky-Tick Records. "The Call" has some sweet interplay between Lassy's baritone horn and producer **Teppo "Teddy Rok" Makynen's** tom-toms, while "Sweet Spot" is a tight bossa stepper with lilting piano and a light-but-lyrical touch on the tenor sax.

Not sure how I missed mentioning it last time 'round, but if you come across the second release from Mukatsuku Records go ahead and snatch it up. An eponymous EP from New Zealand's **Open Souls**, this limited-to-500 release is full of raw funk, with "You Got Me Thinkin'" (featuring the brash belting of Tyra Hammond) being my current fave.

Always been a fan of **Yam Who?** and **Eska** so it's not surprising I'm digging the new **Electrons** track, "Dirty Basement" (Genuine), which has the former on remix duties and the latter doing her thing on the mic. Sassy, funky, with a little more electronic sheen than many Yam Who? productions, this song is a great ode to the bare essentials of partying.

As for the bare essentials in a track, how about just the bass and the drums? That (and a Samuel L. Jackson loop) is damn near all that's happening in the "Dave Da Gato's Baad Ass Tapas Remix" of **Inverse Cinematics** "7 by 7" (Faces), and it's damn near all you need. Big ol' chunky bass for your face. "Thumper," on the b, is not to be missed either, where a similar-style bass gets frisky alongside snappy snares. Also from Faces Records is "The Meet" from L'Arroye and Ky (a.k.a. **Karoye**)—heavy, soulful bruk business that's all about shaking it, with strings, rubbery bass, and plenty of cowbell. The 12" even has some **Domu** damage on the b, where he has his way with 2004's "Be the One."

'Nuff tips from me—time for y'all to go track down some of this hotness!



Photo by Sri McKinnon

Future Jazz Guest Reviews: Robert Luis

Brighton's Tru Thoughts label—and its hip-hop hooligan imprint, Zebra Traffic—needs no introduction to those familiar with the 21st-century funk and jazz family. Alice Russell, The Bamboos, Quantic, Nostalgia 77—TT might as well be Motown when it comes to churning modern sounds into funk-butter. Label honcho Robert Luis is intent on not only showcasing the finest steeds in his stable, but taking a little credit where it's due with his recent compilation, *Shapes*, which features Brighton barons Dirty Diggers' 'ip-'op and Jumbonics big-beat cover of The Strokes' "Last Nite." On the occasion of his own release with TM Juke, *Floating Heavy*, under the moniker Me&You, Luis takes us for a ride through his current crate-diggin' faves. *Justin Hopper*
www.tru-thoughts.co.uk

TYPE & JB "LET ME KNOW" Root Elevation/UK/12

Type & JB are Bristol's latest future-soul prodigies. The vocalists are between 16 and 18 years old, so they were not even born when The Wild Bunch, Massive Attack, and Smith & Mighty were releasing music! Tough drums, sung vocals, raps, and dirty basslines... what more could you want? Also check their first single, "The PL," for a slept-on classic. *Robert Luis*

TRUSME BROWN'S Still Love 4 Music/US/12EP

I don't play too much 4/4 stuff but I can't get enough of this tune. Think Quincy Jones (*Off the Wall*-era) meeting Moodyman via soulful boogie and you still don't even get close to describing this piece of vinyl. *Robert Luis*

AZAXX "FIESTA TROPICAL" white/FRA/CD-R

This had been sitting in my promo pile for a while and I wish good records I got sent could speak to me so they didn't get lost behind the piles of wack hip-hop/R&B promos major labels send me. Columbian Cumbia mixed up with shuffling beats from France means I always get asked "What's the tune?" when this is spun. *Robert Luis*

THE RHYTHMAGIC ORCHESTRA "AFRICAN MAILMAN" Impossible Ark/US/12

A Latin-jazz dance version of a Nina Simone track is what the world needs now. It sounds like it was made in Cuba but was actually recorded in a dark and small basement studio in East London. Only 500 vinyl copies pressed worldwide, so be quick on this. *Robert Luis*



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REVIEWS || COLUMNS



Read the Label
By Jesse "Drosco" Serwer

HIP-HOP MIXTAPES, WHITE LABELS, AND SHIT



Percee P photo by Joao Canziani



The One

With hip-hop vinyl inching toward the grave and the mixtape circuit in flux following the DJ Drama raid, the pickings in this neck of the woods have been slim. Fortunately, there are some positive developments on the horizon.

Peter Agoston of Female Fun Records has started a new 45-only sub-label, Cult 45, whose inaugural release, **DJ Spinna's** "The Ill Kudana" b/w "Abizmal," consists of richly layered instrumentals in the typical Spinna fashion (Bollywood-flavored flute-looper "Ill Kudana" is the winner, though). Look out for upcoming releases from **Dante Ross, Sadat X, Spencer Doran,** and **Mos Def** with **Ge-Ology**.

A-Trak, who recently retired his long-running Audio Research imprint, is one of the forces behind the new 12"-driven label Fool's Gold, which launches with **Kid Sister's** "Control" b/w "Damn Girl." While the whole hipster club-rap phenomenon is getting old quick, you can't knock Kid Sister's flow. She might be resplendent in thrift-store threads and cute as hell but this girl has the Chicago double-time style down pat, thick South Side accent and all. (Is it real?) Check the b-side for a remix of "Damn Girl," courtesy of juke king **Gant-Man**. A-Trak, who produced the original "Damn Girl," will release his "Dirty South Dance" 12" next, followed by releases from **GLC**, Gant-Man, and the entertaining (but unfortunately named) Chi duo **The Cool Kids**.

Om Records, meanwhile, continues to drop bombs through its Om Hip-Hop subsidiary. On the heels of **Zeph & Azeem's** hot "That Type of Music" b/w "Play the Drum," mysterious North Carolina act **The One** comes with "Beautiful/Wonderful" b/w "Pistol Whipped." Like fellow space-funk travelers Sa-Ra, The One takes cues from '80s electro-funk pioneers Kleer ("Intimate Connection"), even throwing a cheesy guitar solo in the middle of "Beautiful Wonderful." Strangely, it works.

Following the recent El Michels Affair/Raekwon collabo, carmaker Scion has once again teamed up funk and rap acts for a new 12" billed as **Big Daddy Kane** and **Percee P** vs. **Connie Price and The Keystones** (Scion A/V). I caught a Kane show recently and the Smooth Operator definitely still gets the job done but Percee P's b-sider, "International Hustler," packs a little more oomph than his "Give a Demonstration."

Dutch label Rush Hour's new instrumental beat compilation, *Beat Dimensions Vol. 1*, is stacked with impressive contributions from producers from all over the world, but Scotland's **Hudson Mohawke** steals the show with his jam, "Trace" (album compiler **Cinnaman** also kills with his "Parker"). Together with Irish beatsmith Mike Slotte, Mohawke has also been dropping some serious heat under the name **Heralds of Change**. The duo's recent "Sittin on the Side" b/w "Rock With You" (All City) features US MCs **Oddisee**, **Unknown**, and **Mudd** spitting atop two of the Celtic pair's bottom-heavy, Detroit-flavored beats (think Dilla, Platinum Pied Pipers), along with a pair of instrumentals, "Callin Shots" and "Ridin Chrome." So international.

Dr. Dre says this is the year he finally unleashes *Detox* on the world. If that's true, one artist who will feature prominently in the mix is recent Aftermath signee **Bishop Lamont**. The Carson, CA rapper has been flexing his verbal muscle on a series of street albums of late, the most recent of which is the provocative, **DJ Skee**-hosted *N*gger Noize* (the cover of which depicts a black man in a Klan robe). A backpacker with an agenda and a chip on his shoulder, Lamont looks ready to flip things in a new direction, à la past Dre cohorts Ice Cube and Eminem. Watch out.

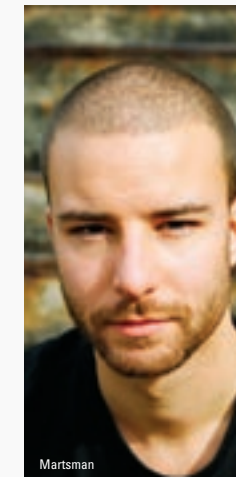


Fast Forward
By Method One

EXPLORING THE BOUNDARIES OF DRUM & BASS



Klute



Martsman

As summer months begin to replace spring ones, the heat isn't limited to the numbers on a thermometer. This is the time of year where labels start pushing their best material, and with all the new bits on the shelves, it becomes a little harder to figure out just where to spend your hard-earned money. I understand, and I'm here to help.

First on the list is an album that has been getting a lot of buzz over the past few months, Hospital Recordings' *Weapons of Mass Creation 3* compilation. With solid contributions from the likes of **CLS**, **Cyantific**, **Blame**, **A-Sides**, **Sonic**, and **London Electricity**, there is a little something for everyone. And that's not even mentioning "Panda Style" by **L.A.O.S.**, a bubbling batch of madcap silliness that has already become one of the most loved and hated tunes of 2007, depending on who you ask.

If you like your beats with a more serious vibe, **Klute** has got you covered with *The Emperor's New Clothes* (Commercial Suicide/BBS). Klute has always excelled at assimilating a wide range of influences into his tunes, and throughout the course of this album you are bound to hear echoes of punk, techno, shoegazer rock, and even redheaded piano players. But the real magic lies in how Klute can take these random elements and make them his own, creating an album both strong enough for the clubs and deep enough for home listening. All in all, it's a very satisfying experience, especially the import CD version with its bonus techno- and downtempo disc.

New York's Offshore Recordings comes correct with its new comp, *Buried Treasure*, which isn't afraid to gleefully color outside the lines of established drum & bass boundaries. Featuring contributions from **Resound**, **Fanu**, **Martsman**, **ASC**, **Graphic**, and more, *Buried Treasure* inhabits a world where the drum edits come fast and furious, sound effects are

tweaked and twisted until they fall apart, and a two-step is nowhere to be found. Also, you gotta love the comic-book packaging.

While we're in leftfield, Atlanta's Soothsayer Recordings has long pushed a dark and dirty sound that eschews current D&B trends. **Alpha Omega's** "Mind Rage" b/w "Marksman" continues that tradition with an all-out drum assault that takes many elements of the old-school "darkness" sound and brings them in line with modern production values. **Bizzy B**—or at least the 1993 version of him—would be proud. In other Soothsayer news, be sure to check out their new sub-label, Dubplatelet, which will be releasing everything from ragga to breakcore to dubstep.

After all that darkness, it's good to spin around completely and end this column with something a little lighter. But while Red Mist Recordings may fall under the banner of the resurgent atmospheric drum & bass scene, their new release is certainly no lightweight. Russia's **Electrosoul System** seems to be on nearly every label nowadays, but "To the Future" b/w "Just Because You Walk Away" is among their best work. The lovely melodies and tricky drum patterns merge together perfectly, and the detailed programming is full of surprising twists. Get it.

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BB International & Wendy Wonder



Balkan Beat Box



Black Bridge

When the Big Bill finally comes due, I'll have a lot of explaining to do—that's for damn sure. But if I can be proud of one thing, it's riding on the AIDS Lifecycle bike ride from San Francisco to L.A. these past few years. This month, over 3,000 riders and roadies will pedal 550 miles down the coast through Santa Cruz, Salinas, King City, Paso Robles, Santa Maria, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Ventura into Santa Monica and L.A. to raise money in the fight against AIDS and HIV. It's tough, and it's an amazing journey, and it's heartbreaking, and it's inspiring, and it's one of the most incredible things I've ever been a part of. And when TeamWino rolls into the V.A. in Brentwood on June 9th, be sure the Tecates are on ice!

1. BALKAN BEAT BOX NU MED

J Dub/US/CD, 12

If there's a God for rowdy Croatians, I'll be rocking the Garden Festival this July at Barbarella's Disco in Zadar, and Balkan Beat Box will play a large part in my set. In fact, it will be the odd gig that won't feature BBB this summer, or in the foreseeable future. Brilliant, funky, genre-crossing breaks from the Mediterranean diaspora. Crucial.

2. MOPHONO "TIGHTEN UP REMIX"

CB Records/US/7

DJ Centipede (a.k.a. Mophono) has crafted one of the drum-yummy-est re-edits this DJ has ever heard. Track a pair down and grease up your cross-fader. This shit is *ill*—and makes the crowds go nuts.

3. V/A CHOICES VOL.1

Ubiquity/US/12EP

And speaking of funking it up, don't sleep on The Lions featuring Noelle from Rebirth covering the Lyn Collins classic "Think," or Percee P joining Connie Price and The Keystones on "Thundersounds," for some big-band sounds done right.

4. CHAZ JANKEL

"TO WOO LADY KONG" B/W "3,000,000 SYNTHS"

Tirk/UK/12

"Lady Kong" is a version of the Larry Levan/Paradise Garage fave "Glad to Know You" from the ex-keyboardist for Ian Dury and The Blockheads, but the stunner here is 1981's "3,000,000 Synths." It was decades ahead of itself at the time, and sounds just as mind-bending today.

5. V/A WEAPONS OF HOPE EP.01

Little-D Soundlab/NETH/12EP

Lovely, cinematic instrumentals on this new label out of Amsterdam. My faves are the melancholy "Past Expression" by 40 Winks and JLS' bass-driven hip-hop on "Room for Error." Good jazzy, moody stuff.

6. V/A PANGEA ORGANICS PRESENTS NATURAL SELECTION

Black Bridge/US/CD

Boulder, Colorado DJ/producers Black Bridge team up with bodycare line Pangea Organics for a soothing downtempo mix just perfect for brunch or bathtime! Standouts are tracks from Cosmic Rocker, Grandpa Mojo, and the Black Bridge boys themselves on "Cleft for Me."

7. B&B INTERNATIONAL & WENDY WONDER

NOT TOUCHING THE GROUND

Murena Records/DEN/12EP

Production duo B&B paint an impressive portrait of reggae- and dub-infused hip-hop beats for Wendy Wonder's urgent, almost pleading delivery. "No More" touches on ska and live horns, while "For Real" is a deep head-nodder well worth searching out.

8. BUMPS BUMPS

Stones Throw/US/CD

Heavy percussion madness from the three drummers of Tortoise—John Herndon, Dan Bitney, and John McEntire. Thinking-man's drum breaks and intellectual low-end theory for the discerning b-boy and girl.

9. RONDO BROTHERS SEVEN MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

Citrus to Citrus-War Chant/US/CD

Another gloriously uncategorizable record from the Rondos. Weird, melodic pop and subtle funk featuring a slew of guest vocalists and players. This makes me want to drink wine coolers on a sailboat, just like The Suburbs made me feel in high school.

10. DEEJAY OM REHEATED NAAN & CURRY

Galapagos4/US/CD

A bit of Bollywood, some b-boy breaks, and lots of spicy curry makes this a good bet for fans of the Codek/Turtables on the Hudson sound. Tracks like "The Arrival," "Bellyful of Dharma," and "Dancing With the Ladies of Bombay" are party-ready.

11. JAK DANIELS BAR HOPPIN

Bomb/US/CD

While Queens roughnecks Jak Daniels and producer Johnny Walker are joined by some heavyweights (Sadat X, Buckshot, Craig G, etc.), I've gotta say it's the two DJ JS-1 re-workings of "Jak of Spades" and "Jak da Ripper" that hit the hardest, with Daniels in top form.

12. TURNTABLE TYKOONZ

PAINT THE TOWN (FEATURING SAAFIR)

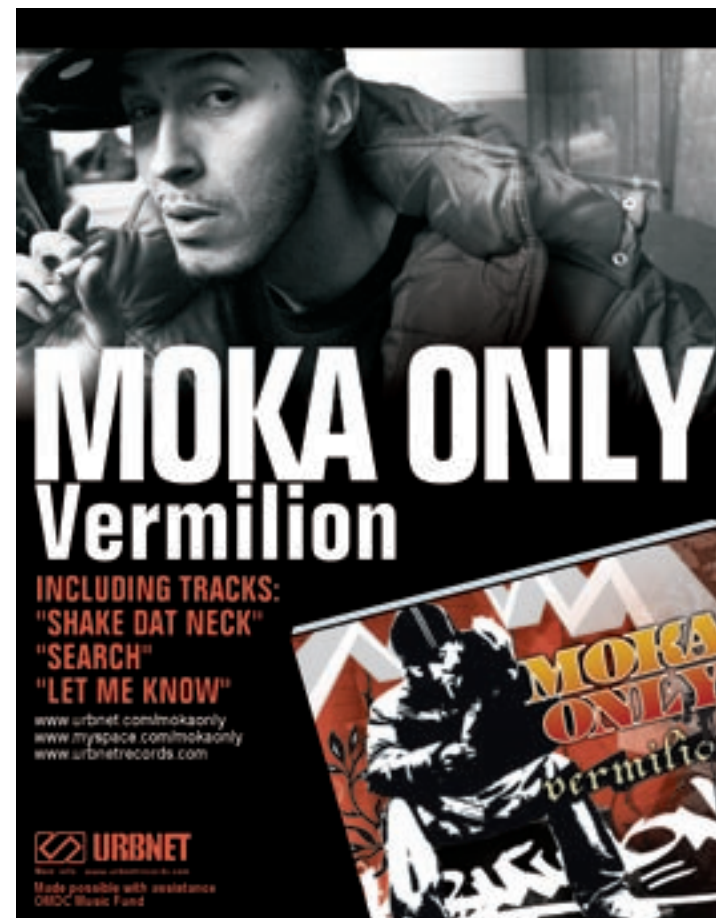
mixtape/US/CD

The Tykoonz do justice to a Bay Area legend on their latest mix, featuring classics from Saafir alongside a bunch of exclusives and some live interludes. Hot shit from The Town.

LUCKY 13) MUDD "PLOT OF LAND"

Rong/US/12

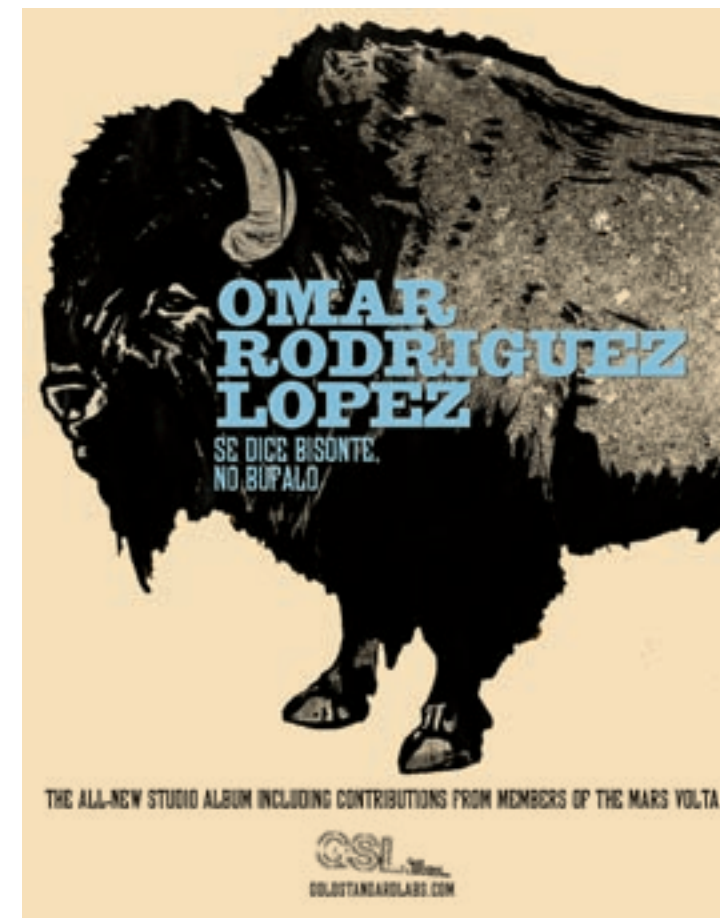
Although it'll never see a dancefloor, this groovy little odd-tempo'd roller could be the bastard child of Stevie Nicks and Nick Drake, and should be played on all college radio stations at 4 a.m.—just to make the vampires happy.



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IN THE STUDIO: MICE PARADE

A studio-sharp multi-instrumentalist takes us to homemade analog heaven.

WORDS: BRANDON IVERS PHOTO: PAUL O'VALLE

For the record, Adam Pierce's Mice Parade isn't really a post-rock band. The music does share some of the genre's trademarks—namely dense, intricate drumming, non-standard instruments, and wild dynamics—but it also defies stereotypes by delving deeper into actual *songs*. Mice Parade isn't a post-post rock band either... it's just that you don't need a bong and 10 minutes of careful listening to get into songs like "Tales of Las Negras," from his latest, self-titled endeavor.

Prior to Mice Parade, Pierce acted as drummer for a slew of bands, which included The Swirlies, The Dylan Group, HiM, and Múm. These days, Pierce splits his time between operating the Bubble Core label and distribution company, making music as Mice Parade, and rebuilding vintage tape machines at his recently self-built studio, The Mills.

XLR8R: WHEN DID YOU GET YOUR START PLAYING DRUMS?

Adam Pierce: I started playing when I was around 12 or 13. I had quit playing piano, and I thought drums would be more fun—and they were. But my piano background allowed me to read the rhythms, and I had pretty good coordination already, so I think that helped me get a quick start. From there, I played in a bunch of shitty high school bands doing Rolling Stones covers for a while, but right around my 16th birthday, I joined this band, The Philistines Jr. We ended up doing three Peel Sessions, and I did a UK tour with the band when I was 16. It was pretty awesome. Since then, another guy in that band, my old buddy Peter Katis, has gone on to be a well-respected engineer for Interpol and so forth. And I work with him now—he did the mixing on this last album.

THE DRUMS ON "TALES OF LAS NEGRAS" ARE CRUNCHY WITHOUT SOUNDING FLAT OR OVERLY DISTORTED. HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

Almost every time I record drums, I throw up a distortion mic. You throw up some room mics and you throw up one mic that you intentionally distort through compressors and gain and shit. It's just a matter of how much [that mic] gets used. There are some tracks where it's barely in the mix at all, and there's some, like ["Tales of Las Negras"] where the sound is a bit more prominent.

WHEN YOU MIC DRUMS, ARE THERE ANY OTHER METHODS YOU USUALLY USE?

I work with my surroundings. On older records, like *Obrigado Saudade*, I recorded and mixed everything on a little ghetto setup in my old basement. Since then, I've moved studios, where I do the tracking, but I go elsewhere for the [mixing] part. This new studio has a bigger room, and there's more mics and channels and stuff, so I've been taking advantage of that. I used to sometimes just do three mics, like on the older records; I did a lot of kick, snare, and overhead mics. But now I'm mic'ing each drum with one mic, and I'm putting two room mics out there and that additional distortion mic, too.

DO YOU TRACK INTO A COMPUTER THESE DAYS?

I always used tape... I'd never used a computer for recording until this last record. But when I set up my studio for this last record, I was going to use this two-inch Sony 24-track tape machine as the hub. Once we got [the tape machine] in there, we turned the thing on, and it didn't work. It ended up taking me a few months to get it up and running; by that time, the Mice Parade album was already done—I had a deadline. I hate the computer, but not for sound reasons—more for using-your-eyes-in-the-process kind of reasons. Talk about linear: it's like left to right, beginning to end, there's your song. It doesn't sit right with me. You should just be listening. Pro Tools doesn't let you do a lot of the cool things you can do with tape, either. Like... I'll slow the tape down just a tiny bit, like a half-step in pitch on recording, so when you speed it back up, the sound is brighter, and it has this shimmer. I didn't even know you *couldn't* do that with Pro Tools when we started recording.

SOME OF THE INSTRUMENTATION FROM MICE PARADE SOUNDS LIKE A HARP, BUT I CAN'T REALLY TELL. ARE YOU USING A DELAY?

No delay. It's all just straight-up guitar. It's a technique I've done with some previous albums, too, dividing guitar parts down and overlapping triplet rhythms—basically thinking like a drummer with guitar notes. The notes are all fast triplets, but one part is in groups of four and another part is in groups of six.

Mice Parade is out now on Bubble Core. www.bubblecore.com



In Mice Parade's Studio (clockwise from top left): Pro Tools, Shure Beta 52 microphone, Space Echo RE 201, Soundcraft Ghost Board



ARTIST TIPS: DJ KENTARO

The name Kentaro Okamoto has been on the lips of DJ enthusiasts for years, likely well before he took the 2002 DMC World Championship title with the competition's first perfect score ever. But with his entrée into production, the aptly titled *Enter* (Ninja Tune), Okamoto is poised to gain a new level of notoriety (and an enlarged fan base). *Enter* features not only his scratch talents (and styles from drum & bass to hip-hop), but also those of MCs Spank Rock, Hifana, Fat Jon, and The Pharcyde. Committing chirps and flares to disc challenges even the most veteran DJs, so we tapped Kentaro for his five most important scratch-recording tips. *Derek Grey*

www.djkentaro.com www.henrikschwartz.com

1. MAINTAIN THE LIVE FEEL

Try to record scratches that are one-of-a-kind, which you won't be able to re-do again. While precious scratches are cool, sometimes imperfect ones have a better live feel. It's not always necessary that the cuts are on the beats, either—it's all about the groove.

2. BALANCE YOUR VOLUME

Sometimes you want to record scratches at higher volume, but to use scratches as a sound effect or spice in the song, you might want to keep the volume low. And once you record scratches, it's always good to chop out some low frequencies. With lows, the sound usually ends up really "round," and takes away from the sharpness of the cut.

3. SELECT YOUR SAMPLES CAREFULLY

It's really up to you, but generally try to match your samples to the song's concept (ie. If the lyrics are about good old days, then have some samples related to that era). Using known '90s samples will date your sound to the '90s, and so on. I usually pick lots of instrumental samples to scratch, so I can be one of the instrumental players in the band.

4. BE UNIQUE

Your scratch style is really important, so don't copy someone else's. If you're scratching in a song, then you need to see the whole song's story and think about the placement of the cuts as well. Prevent them from overlapping with the vocals or other good, recognizable instrumentals.

5. KNOW YOUR GEAR

I use Ortofon's Concorde Scratch cartridge, which is really good, fat, and thick, and a Technics SH-EX1200 mixer. I'm actually creating original needles for Ortofon specially made for club- and scratch use—real dope tools for all DJs!



(From left) Ortofon Concorde scratch cartridge, Technics SH-EX1200 mixer



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A TOUCH OF CLASSIC

Universal Audio Neve Classic Console Plug-ins
MSRP: \$599; www.uaudio.com

Neve made legendary hardware. And lately, Universal Audio has made quite a business emulating legendary hardware. So yes, the **Neve Classic Console Bundle** is a match made in heaven. Designed for UAD-1 PCI cards, the bundle features painstaking recreations of some of the most revered EQs and compressors in recording history. The 1073 three-band EQ is famous for its presence, sheen, and the golden sparkle it adds to vocals. The 1081 four-band EQ is clean, and infuses tracks with a nuanced character. The 33609 is a smooth and musical compressor with a gorgeous overdrive. These meticulous plug-ins are CPU hogs, but DSP-optimized "light" versions are also included. But keep in mind that Neve consoles were renowned for the quality of their preamps. If you don't have a good signal coming in, don't expect Universal Audio to pick up the slack. *Roger Thomasson*



STAR TRAK

Native Instruments Traktor Scratch Digital DJ System
MSRP: \$669; www.native-instruments.com

Rane/Serato's Scratch Live interface has owned the world of digital DJing for a couple years now, but that could all change soon. Companies like Native Instruments have finally exploited the kink in Serato's armor, namely the lack of internal effect support and marginal audio quality. But while other new products have taken the cheap-o route for those improvements, NI's **Traktor Scratch** goes for the snob market by using the Audio 8 interface, which boasts 96-kHz/24-Bit sample rates, eight-in/eight-out with two pre-amps, and improved error correction and latency. Awesome for the audiophiles, but Traktor's internal effects are great to build into DJ sets (the delay is the ultimate in-a-pinch mix-out). Who knows whether these innovations will beat out the competition's simplicity (remember Vestax's doomed mission in the late '90s?), but here's to hoping the competition will push things forward. *Brandon Ivers*



BITTER SWEET

Apple TV Media-Streaming Center
MSRP: \$299; www.apple.com

In all the ways you expect **Apple TV** to be great, it is: It's by far the easiest, most user-friendly way stream your iTunes media from your computer to your living room. It's small. It's plug-and-play. Unfortunately, it's also frustrating in exactly the way you expect it to be: Apple has made its system a closed one, meaning you can't stream any video formats that iTunes doesn't support (Divx, XviD, and WMV, etc). On top of that is a lack of true HD support; streaming HD content results in lots of artifacting, which looks rather fugly on your shiny new HDTV. And to boot, 40 GB just isn't enough space. Slick as hell, but not quite ready for prime time—stay tuned for Apple HDTV. *Evan Shamoon*

ALL THE FEATURES OF A PROFESSIONAL RIG AT A TENTH OF THE PRICE.



BUDGET BEATS

Cakewalk Sonar Home Studio 6
MSRP: \$139.99; www.cakewalk.com

If building a budget studio is the order of the day (and rebuilding Tonto isn't an option), look no further as Cakewalk has developed a platform that houses all the features of a professional rig at a tenth of the price. With capabilities of full-function MIDI control and pristine 24-bit/192 kHz multi-track recording, **Cakewalk Sonar Home Studio 6** can put you on track to producing top electronic hits. Templates are included to get your projects underway without hours of auto-load management. With a loop-packed sampler, six new instruments, and 11 new effects, plus the ability to use all the current VST, VSTi, and DX plug-ins, this budget studio just became suited for a schooled recording engineer. *Praxis*

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Latest installment in the budget CD sampler series focuses on the great Jamaican vocalists; Dennis Brown, Gregory Isaacs, The Congos, Horace Andy, Max Romeo and Yabby You.

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NOKIA N95 MULTIMEDIA COMPUTER

MSRP: \$749; www.nseries.com

Is it just a tad pretentious for cell phone companies to call their wares "multimedia computers"? In a word: totally. Sure the **Nokia N95** allows you to check email, browse the 'net, find yourself on a GPS grid, play music, play movies, manage data, print, latch onto WiFi networks, attach a wireless keyboard... Okay, maybe it is actually a multimedia computer, but damn it, it's still a phone at heart (albeit one with a slider-function, 5MP Zeiss-glass cam). Obviously, a purchase like this one comes down to what you need your phone to do, and for us, it's a bit daunting to have so many features packed tightly into a somewhat unintuitive interface. Yes, it's an impressive tool, and short of seeing the iPhone in action, the N95 is tops for this market, but for now, I'll keep my laptop, cell phone, and camera separate, thanks! *Derek Grey*

THE ULTIMATE DICK-WAVING SYNTH FOR COLLECTOR GEEKS...



TO THE MOON

Arturia Jupiter-8V Virtual Synthesizer

MSRP: \$249; www.arturia.com

Arturia soldiers on with their TBS-like mission of updating classic synths into the digital realm, this time recreating Roland's monstrous Jupiter 8. The Jupiter 8 is more or less the ultimate dick-waving synth for collector geeks, due partially to its rarity, but also its extensive use by innovators like Prince and Heaven 17. Being fair to the purists that traded their souls for one of these, Arturia's re-creation doesn't perfectly ape all the sound nuances of the original; although it's still a fantastic plug-in due to the innovations it brings to the Jupiter template. Integrating a full-range of effects, an awesome step sequencer, and a modulation matrix that Arturia calls "Galaxy," the new features allow the **Jupiter-8V** to sound retro or contemporary depending on how (and if) you program it. The increased 32-note polyphony, 400-plus presets, and full plug-in compatibility are just icing on the cake. *Brandon Ivers*



GET UP, STAND UP

Ti700 Timex iPod Alarm Clock

MSRP: \$69; www.ihomeaudio.com

Your iPod already holds your hand on your way to work, convinces you to get a little more exercise, and maybe even replaced your turntables, so why shouldn't you let it drag you out of bed in the morning? iHome's latest addition to the iPod-docking-station market sees them team up Timex in order to bring you the **Ti700** iPod clock radio. Compact enough for travel and sleek enough for your pad, the Ti700 features dual alarms, nine AM/FM presets, a remote control (for long-distance snoozing), and a clean, bright LCD display. Most importantly, the dock will accept all iPod sizes (including both early models and the iPod nano) and includes a line-in jack for non-Apple MP3 players. The sound won't exactly blow your socks off (full volume shows some distortion), but it may make it a little easier to pull back those sheets in the morning. *Ross Holland*



PUT THE IE-10S ON AND YOU'LL NO DOUBT HEAR THE DIFFERENCE.

EAR AND NOW

M-Audio IE-10 Professional Reference Earphones

MSRP: \$129.95; www.m-audio.com

In-ear buds are a dime a dozen these days, with everyone and their brother coming out with "i-" version, MP3-player-friendly editions, so sometimes it's hard to tell the difference, at least at a glance, from cheap, iPod-matching earphones or M-Audio's **IE-10** reference buds. Put the IE-10s on, of course, and you'll no doubt hear the difference. Along with good, hearty cords, which don't get caught in zippers if you take them on the subway, these little babies are packed with Ultimate Ears' technology: precision-balanced armature drivers that maintain maximum efficiency and put out really nice, natural-sounding bass. (Jump up to the double-priced IE-20XB or IE-30s, with dual drivers, and you'll get even greater frequency response.) Great sound in all, but I had trouble achieving a proper seal with the IE-10s, and found the bendable cord a bit uncomfortable around my ears. *Ken Taylor*



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Madlib & Peanut Butter Wolf

Time Out presents The Other Side Los Angeles
 CD/DVD Out Now!

Madlib takes you on a wild ride through the musical past, present and future of Los Angeles while on the DVD Stones Throw supreme Peanut Butter Wolf is your guide with the inside scoop on the City of Angels.

"It's as if you're carrying around a local hipster in your back pocket, albeit one with a decent taste in music." -NY Daily News



Ellen Allien
 Time Out presents The Other Side Berlin

"Pop this in your suitcase along with your translation book and currency converter and you'll be good to go." -Tokion



Foreign Islands
 Restart Now!

"A mouth watering slice of scuzzy New York electro-drenched punk... a master class in attitude and angular rock. Brilliant." -NME



Fujiya & Miyagi

Transparent Things
 CD Out Now!

"Danceable Kraut-pop, with head-scratching lyrics and droves of cute Brits loving every minute of it." -TOKION

"They're doing for 70s krautrock and motorik what the DFA did for early 80s electro. Indeed, without even being asked, they've gone and done the unthinkable: They've actually made krautrock fun." -Pitchfork Media (8.3 Rating)



Klute
 The Emperor's New Clothes

The stunning new album from drum & bass legend Klute. Over two hours of music!

CD Out June 5th on Breakbeat Science Recordings

VIS-ED: SUPERDEUX

HANGING OUT IN SEBASTIAN ROUX'S FLASH KINGDOM.
WORDS JOSIAH HUGHES IMAGES SUPERDEUX



The world of Superdeux resembles an adult version of Saturday morning cartoons, combining vaguely ominous characters with elements of hip-hop culture and playful surrealism. The international company, brainchild of 32-year-old French computer geek/ex-graffiti artist Sebastian Roux, had a humble start. While he was a programmer for Team cHmAn in the mid-'90s, Roux spent his evenings tinkering around with early versions of Flash. He originally created the Superdeux website in 1999 to showcase his experiments but, thanks to mentions in journals like *Pictoplasma*, the site blew up.

Partnering with Flash programmer Stéphane "Tepat" Huleux, who Roux refers to as "the little genius," Superdeux has grown into a multifaceted design boutique, with offices in New York and Lille, France. The company has helped revolutionize modern advertising, web design, animation, and toys. Dedicated to combining effective communication with an adventurous

sense of humor, they have developed a client list as diverse as MTV, Comedy Central, Hugo Boss, Johnson & Johnson, Sony Music, and Kid Robot. Similarly, their toys have included high-profile collaborations with the varied likes of Red Magic, Stereotype, and Kid Robot.

It's inevitable that Superdeux will keep growing. Their upcoming projects include more toy collaborations with Stereotype, STRANGeco, Sixpack, and Bshit, Superdeux wall stickers through the Domestic series, the further development of the artist collaboration network Unchi Leisure Centre, and a solo show at New York's Showroom Gallery in 2008. On top of that, Roux continues to run his Unchi record label and perform club bangers with Lowclub. Somehow, Seb found time to discuss Superdeux, cartoons, and the value of good advertising.

www.superdeux.com

ABOVE
Bshit x Sixpack t-shirt design
collaboration, 2007

RIGHT
Superdeux exclusive for
XLR8R Vis-Ed, 2007





What, in your mind, is Superdeux?

Superdeux is a mix between something artistic and a marketing thing. It's a creative solution to communication.

Where did the name Superdeux come from?

When I was doing graffiti, my name was seb2seb, and when I started working with a computer I decided to do something bigger. "Deux," in French, means "two." Voilà, Superdeux!

Did you attend art school?

I did some interior-design school and graphic-design school, but I've learned a lot by myself.

How do you approach each piece from start to finish?

When I do a piece, I start with a sentence. It could be some rap lyrics, or a word. I try to play around that with a character, or a handmade font, on paper first. When I find something interesting, I start to draw it with Illustrator. When I reach the

color process, I only use a few colors. My design is not complicated or technical. It's more of a combination of an idea and a design.

All of your work seems to be computer-based, besides the toys. Do you have a background in drawing, painting, or sculpting?

Not really. I was doing graffiti back in the day, and I still have to sketch my ideas on paper first, but the computer is my main tool.



What has been the craziest thing that's happened to you as you built the company up?

I think it's when I decided to move to Vancouver, then to New York in 2004. I was there to start a company with Tristan Eaton (Thunderdogs Studio). We still work together, but on our own respective companies. He's a fantastic designer and businessman.

What piece are you most proud of?

The Stereotype toys line. I've been doing this project for five years now, and it's amazing. I've had the opportunity to work and meet very talented

people like Phunk Studio, Genevieve Gauckler, Bill McMullen, Staple, 123klan, Demo, and Acquired.

What does a day in your life look like?

Just fun: wake up early, turn music on, check emails, do some work, go out for dinner, meet some friends, party, sleep.

What do you listen to while you work?

I listen to things from my label Unchi: Auto, Lowclub (my music project with Junior Market and Spencer), Stereopleasure. Also, some stuff from Ed



LEFT
Artwork for the ZWE exhibition, 2007

ABOVE (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP)
Stereotype series 5 Acid, 2007;
Slipmat designs, 2006;
Don't Sweat The Technic flyer design, 2007

Banger Records, Spank Rock, and some hip-hop from the '90s and before. Music is one of the most important things in my life.

Who are some of your influences?
Andy Warhol, Adrian Frutiger, Takashi Murakami, James Brown.

Who are some of your favorite modern artists?
Parra, Kaws, So-Me, David Flores. Everyone should know about them. They are the perfect mix between art and marketing. Genius!

When and how did you get into toys?
I've been designing toys for six years now. My first contact with the toy industry was through Red Magic, then Kid Robot. Now, I'm developing a toy project for STRANGEco.

What is your favorite cartoon of all time?
Samurai Jack.

You've worked for some big companies. Has there ever been a company you've turned down?

A few years ago, I was commissioned by a giant tobacco firm. I tried to work on the project, but then decided to stop. I just wasn't feeling okay with it, and no good ideas were coming out of my head.

Does advertising ever irritate you?
Yes, but I always try to imagine what I would think if I was the target. It's fun, and it's a good way to decide if it's good advertising or not.

How do you find the perfect balance of advertising and art?
I don't try to find it, and there is no need to find it, I think. I want to touch everybody when I do something. I try to use clear messages, so that you can like it or hate it but, in the end, you'll understand it.

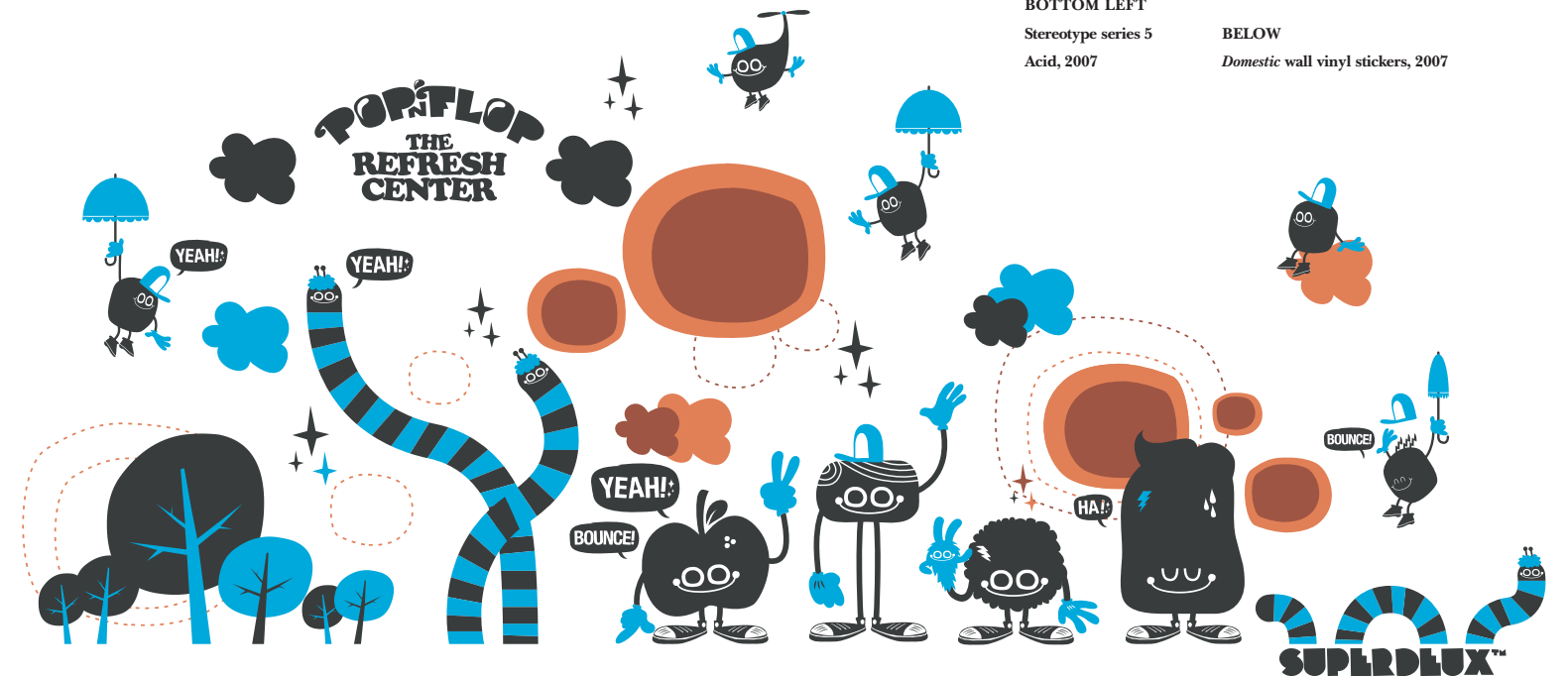


FAR LEFT
Shopping Mall Party
flyer design, 2007

ABOVE
Bshit t-shirts and toys line in collaboration with (clockwise from top left) Grotesk, 2K by Gingham, 777 Run, and Skull Dezain, 2006

BOTTOM LEFT
Stereotype series 5
Acid, 2007

BELOW
Domestic wall vinyl stickers, 2007





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Words Ken Taylor

Illustration Gaelan McKeown



ILLEGAL ART

A CREATIVE COPYRIGHT CORRUPTOR PLIES HIS TRADE BEHIND A CURTAIN OF ANONYMITY.

The record label and online resource known as Illegal Art may not be on the copyright police's radar just yet. But if the label's shadowy Philo T. Farnsworth, a media artist and university instructor, has one more success the size of Black Tuesday (the net's campaign to free-cast Danger Mouse's *Black Album*, for which illegalart.net was one of the strongest proponents) or Girl Talk's copyright-infringing *Night Ripper*, he may have to move to a secret hut in Guam. Since 1998 he's been receiving "cease and desist" letters and media hype for everything from the label's unlicensed remix project, *Deconstructing Beck*, to distributing Todd Haynes' stop-action Barbie-doll-enacted Karen Carpenter biopic. Illegal Art's latest is a joint project with the Recombinations label, a digital re-release of Lecture on Nothing's *September 10*, an audio collage by media artist and major-label engineer (for Ricky Martin and Travis Tritt) Eddie Martin.

XLR8R: Are you getting any negative attention from record companies surrounding the success of *Girl Talk*? I heard that Beck is interested in a remix now.

Philo T. Farnsworth: Everything has been

positive from artists and labels. The only negatives have come from manufacturing and distribution. The Beck remix was a definite surprise given the threatening letters we received from Beck's label, publisher, and personal lawyer in 1998.

How have digital-music retailers dealt with the *Girl Talk* phenomenon?

Everything was great until *Rolling Stone* called up iTunes and asked them how they could sell something like *Night Ripper*. All Girl Talk material was removed the next day and it created a domino effect in that our digital distributor decided to pull *Night Ripper*. (The older titles are still out there.) It currently isn't available for download except in our own download club. We're slowly expanding that to include other material such as Lecture on Nothing's *September 10* and DJ Pantshead & The Evolution Control Committee's *Ritalin Ruckus v2*.

You recently signed hip-hop DJ pioneer Steinski. He was creating mixes that share similarities to *Night Ripper* over 20 years earlier. We're working with him for the release of a two-disc set that

will be a definitive retrospective of material from 1983 to 2003. He is a natural for Illegal Art since his work is truly unique, yet made from pre-existing recordings.

Has Illegal Art gotten you into any trouble?

No real trouble yet. In fact we feel somewhat more protected than we previously did since the Stanford Copyright & Fair Use Center recently seems very interested in representing us *pro bono* if something ends up in court.

What do you think of organizations like Creative Commons, who promote fair share of copyrights?

Creative Commons is definitely a step in the right direction. It allows artists to liberate their own material from some of the rigidity of intellectual property laws. [Our] only criticism is that it further perpetuates the idea that artists should have control over their works. Our philosophy is that once something is in the air anyone should be able to sample it and transform it into something new, regardless of consent.

Lecture on Nothing's *September 10* is out on Recombinations and downloadable at www.illegalart.net.

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